
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES, ON STATE AND ECONOMIC BETTERMENTS, COUNTRY LIVING CONDITIONS, AGRICULTURE, AND THE STATE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION.

GENTLEMEN:

As suggested at some of your Committee meetings, we herewith submit, a statement of the work that the Wisconsin Advancement Association has already done and proposes to do during the next two years; in co-operation with the State Board of Immigration and the Agricultural Schools of the State, to assist in the material development of Wisconsin.

Plan of the Association. This organization comprises about five hundred land owners of from 500 to 500,000 acres, and bankers, merchants, investors and public spirited men throughout the State; and will have available assets for the year's work of at least $50,000.00. This money was raised to be spent to exploit exclusively the resources of Wisconsin. The plan of the Association is to continue its work, raising a similar, if not a larger fund, each year for three years, and to place this money, or a large part of it, at the disposal of a joint committee of its own officers and that of the State Board of Immigration.

Resolutions to that affect were passed last fall by this Association, and joint conferences were held, before it was imagined, that the State Board of Immigration, which is the only Board that can do such work for a State, might be abolished.

In the last decade, the southern half of the State, excepting its larger manufacturing cities, has lost or remained stationary in population. During that time the Northern half has gained about 100,000 while the lumber towns of that section have remained stationary or lost in population, showing a decided change in economic conditions. The thousands of typical lumber jacks that filled the streets of Northern towns each Spring have disappeared. The pressure of civilization was too strong for them, and as
lumbering decreased they were glad to follow the larger lumber operators to the West. Their places in the camps have been taken by the new settlers and their sons. This fact is especially noticeable in the different train scenes of ten years ago and today. Then, following the breaking up of lumber camps, every train had its load of hilarious lumber jacks—now Polish, German or other farmer boys are the only ones to be seen. When, therefore, the loss of the lumber jack, so far as population is considered, it becomes evident that the new settlers in Northern Wisconsin, during the last ten years amount to more than 100,000. The big gain in the Northern half of the State, after it was opened up for settlement continued until about 1905, when Canada and the West commenced to extensively advertise.

The development, of the Canadian Northwest, the West and now the new South, has drawn, from the settled agricultural sections of the Southern half and all the lumber towns of the Northern half of the State, much of our money, and many of our young men.

Money Loss to State. It will be noticed that many banks belong to the Wisconsin Advancement Association. They were induced to join when their attention was called to the Wisconsin money passing monthly through them to Canada, the West and the new South, amounting to hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. The cashier of a small bank in Wood County at first refused to join the Association, saying that he did not see how a bank was interested in this new movement for Wisconsin. He was asked to examine the books of the bank to see how much money passed thru it during that month to purchase land in the West. Out of curiosity he did this, and he was surprised to find that $80,000.00 had been sent during that time, which was lost, not only to his bank, but to the State of Wisconsin forever. It took no further argument to induce him to subscribe $50.00 at once.

Immigration Bureaus in other States. This work of Canada, the West and the South has become serious to the settled portions of the Country, especially the Middle West. It has alarmed Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and even conservative States like Massachusetts and New York. Within the last few years Immigration Bureaus, have been organized and State money provided, or steps taken to do so in all these States. The Immigration Bureau of New York is doing most effective work to keep her sons at home. When this advertising work of partly developed States is allowed to go unchallenged it soon seriously affects every part of the older States, from which settlers are taken; manufacturing industries with provisions to supply a certain