
A History of Migration from
Germany to Canada, 1850-1939

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Jonathan Wagner

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Germany to Canada, 1850-1939



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*To my bookend sons,
Nathaniel and Robert, lights of my life.*

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Introduction

The journey to Montreal [after disembarking at St. John, New Brunswick] was magnificent. Large lakes, fantastic rock formations, open areas alternating with conifer groves mixed with alders and birches. The landscape resembled something right out of Cooper's Leatherstocking tales ... On the trip west to Winnipeg [after the stopover] I saw nickel mines and other mining operations that promised untold riches. The scene was again characterized by frequent lakes, swamps, wild rock formations ... huge conifers, birches, and alders. The strange spectacle made me think that I was traveling through an antediluvian land.¹

So wrote the young immigrant Manfred von Bresler to his parents in Germany in September 1927. Manfred's awestruck response typified the reaction of many German immigrants upon first encountering North America's largest country. Many experienced the same romantic ecstasy, appearing overwhelmed by all-encompassing, primitive nature. Just as fundamentally, Manfred's response exhibited awareness of Canada's difference from his own native land. To those experiencing Manfred's shock, Canada appeared to be arrested at some unrecognizable stage of the past. On its frontier, which appeared so ubiquitous and proximate, Canada often seemed not even vaguely contemporary. Canada's undeveloped state compared to Germany ultimately played a crucial role in the history of German-Canadian migration, influencing not only how Germans responded to Canada but also how Canadians conceived of themselves and of the immigrants they favoured recruiting.

As Dirk Hoerder and other contemporary migration scholars have often pointed out, movement involving change of residence, or migration, has been a prominent theme in human existence for hundreds of years.² Over the centuries, these globally dispersed migrations have been made over short

or long distances; they have been carried out within state boundaries, across them, and even when no boundaries existed. Migrations have been temporary and permanent; they have been circular, linear, and seasonal; they have been undertaken by people individually and in groups. Some have been coerced; others have resulted from freer choice. They have occurred in virtually all the inhabited areas of our world, for many different causes. In “this bewilderingly complex pattern of tidal currents,”³ to quote Frank Thistlethwaite, the movement of Germans to Canada occupies only a small part. Within the global context, German migration to Canada formed part of a regional mass movement occurring between 1800 and 1939 that involved millions of Europeans leaving their historic homes in the old country to take up permanent or temporary residence, or to secure seasonal work in the Atlantic economies.⁴ In that Atlantic mass odyssey, Germany represented only one of the European donors, while Canada was a single receiving state among several, including the United States, Australia, Argentina, and Brazil.⁵ Connecting Canada’s German movement to these more general patterns provides context, perspective, and the basis for comparisons and insights into the migration’s larger significance and meaning. Nevertheless, as Moch and Jackson have emphasized, we must not “allow our concern for understanding migration as a core historical phenomenon to blind us to its link with distinct regional and national histories.”⁶ Like all human experiences, Canada’s German migrations remain special and unique. In this book I have tried to describe this uniqueness while at the same time expanding the picture of human world migration.

Tracing the course of German-Canadian migration from 1850 to the outbreak of war in 1939, I describe how that migration reflected the modernization processes then at work in the sending land, Germany, and in the receiving country, Canada. In other words, as the social orders, political systems, economic arrangements, and ideological assumptions and commitments in the two countries altered, the migration, a fundamental part of the social history of both countries, closely mirrored these alterations. The 1850-1939 migrations are distinguished from earlier movements by the new features and forces characterizing and determining them. In short, a portion of the new world emerged as a result of the Industrial Revolution. The different processes and paces of the changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution’s spread in the two countries determined the nature and extent of the migration to Canada. Because Canada’s economy industrialized later and less completely than Germany’s over the period 1850-1939, Canada’s recruiting of immigrants to provide for its own perceived needs could not win converts in the more industrialized Germany.

I use the terms “modern” and “modernization” differently from the way in which sociologists, economists, or political scientists normally employ them.⁷ By referring to modernization, I am not attempting to fit Canadian

and German events into some kind of predictable model that applies generally to societies experiencing modern economic innovation. Rather, I am employing a synonym for change related to industrial transformation. Similarly, when I refer to “traditional” I do not intend to convey a condition of frozen status, rigid form, or inflexible mindset but customary and usual practices. Anyone familiar with the evolution of Anglo-American common law (that is, law based on custom rather than legislative statute), for example, knows that change has always been inherent in the common law. Likewise, traditional or preindustrial European society never remained totally static; it always exhibited movement or migration. But generally accepted customs and long-hallowed traditions, whatever the opponents of modernization theory may claim, normally changed more slowly before the great watershed of industrialization than after it: industrialization introduced a speeding-up uncommon to earlier times. Hence, I use “traditional” and “modern” only as general adjectives to describe customary (time-tested) and more innovative (post-Industrial Revolution) conditions. Between 1850 and 1939, in both Canada and Germany the customary ways of doing many things changed, and new procedures were introduced in politics, economics, social conventions, and patterns of thinking. All of these areas, as I shall show, affected German migration to Canada, and all mirrored the effects of contemporaneous industrial revolutionary changes.

Before 1850, the stages of economic, social, and political development in both countries showed greater parity than at any other time until after the Second World War. Germany and British North America both had overwhelmingly rural, agriculture-based social and economic systems. Small-holding farmers, artisans, and modest merchants composed the majority of each society.⁸ The two lands nevertheless evolved differently because of the varying pace of economic development. Advancing more rapidly and completely into the industrial age, by 1900 Germany had become a world industrial powerhouse, while Canada continued to rely more heavily on the products of its fields, mines, and forests than on the fruits of its modest industry.⁹

Just how much the two societies shared before 1850 becomes apparent by considering briefly their economic structures. In the first half of the nineteenth century, British North America’s economy depended almost entirely on the bounty nature provided. Agricultural products and the traditional primary sector staples of fur, fish, and timber constituted the economy’s base. A more specific sectoral breakdown for 1851 shows the following distribution: farming employed 32 percent of the labour force, and forestry, fishing, trapping, and mining another 14.8 percent. The total for the primary sector (46.8 percent) thus dwarfed both manufacturing and the tertiary sector, each with 18.9 percent. Export-import statistics underline the importance of renewable resources to this pre-Confederation economy: in

1851 agricultural produce, animal products (e.g., fur and hides), wood, and wood derivatives including paper constituted over 88 percent of British North America's exported goods; finished iron products and textiles made up 40 percent of imports. Finally, labour categories tell the same story. Data available for 1851 show 75 percent of the Canadian labouring population engaged as farmers, lumbermen, miners, fishermen, or trappers. Most obviously absent here are the first practitioners of modern industry. Commenting on this facet of British North America's pre-1850 economy, Marr and Paterson write, "While non-primary occupations grew and expanded from 1763 to 1851 – foundries, boot and shoe factories, brickyards, tobacco factories, banks, furniture plants, and shipyards to name a few – the working population was concentrated in the primary occupations during the first half of the nineteenth century, and the proportion in these occupations may have increased from, say, the 1790s."¹⁰

The general features of Germany's economy at midcentury appeared quite similar to those of England's North American colony. As in Canada, an estimated three-quarters of Germany's population inhabited small rural villages and derived their livelihoods from agriculture or related activities. Indeed, the German peasantry was not far removed from the traditional feudal past, for in some German states peasant emancipation had not been completed as late as the 1840s. Although railroads had already made their appearance in Germany by 1850, the modern factory system and accompanying proletariat remained inchoate. Despite the existence of some proto-industry in Germany, artisans produced what industrial goods there were. David Blackbourn sums up the German scene cogently: "The number of weavers grew from 315,000 to 570,000 between 1800 and 1850 but over 90 percent of looms were hand-operated. Within the overall economy, industry proper continued to be eclipsed by outworking and handicraft production, and even more by agriculture."¹¹

The earliest German settlements in what would eventually become the Dominion of Canada had been established in the eighteenth century. The colony's oldest German settlements were located in the Maritimes; small but thriving permanent centres of German population were formed in Halifax and Lunenburg shortly after 1750. Assigned land upon which to settle by the British government, the original settlers were farmers. Over the years, however, they and their progeny turned from the land to the sea to make their livelihoods. As a result, the Germans in Nova Scotia gradually became subsumed into the majority English community, though still as primary producers.

The American Revolution prompted additional Germans to move to Canada during the late eighteenth century. Among these immigrants, there were three main groups. First, 2,400 German mercenaries employed by King George III elected to move into Canada rather than return to Germany.

Known in the revolution as Hessians, but originally from several petty German principalities also including Brunswick, Anhalt-Zerbst, Waldeck, and Ansbach-Bayreuth, 1,400 of them settled in Quebec. The remaining 1,000 chose Ontario, New Brunswick, or Nova Scotia, where they took up farming, like their compatriots elsewhere in Canada. Another group of Germans came north with those who had remained true to the king during the American rebellion. Known as the United Empire Loyalists, this mostly English group nevertheless included some Germans among its ranks, most of whom settled on the land in Upper Canada. Pennsylvania's Mennonite settlements provided the last and most numerous group of German migrants from the south. Several thousand of these pacifist people abandoned the American colonies during or after the Revolutionary War because of sympathy with the British cause or dissatisfaction with the course of the new republic.¹²

Augmented by natural growth plus the influx of American Mennonites, Ontario's Mennonite communities grew steadily in the early years of the nineteenth century. As Gerhard Bassler points out, "From 1805 until the War of 1812 and throughout the 1820s an uninterrupted stream of Mennonites on foot, on horseback, and in Conestoga wagons drawn by four- and six-horse teams moved along a 400 mile trail from different parts of Pennsylvania to the secured German Company Tract on the Grand River." Like the earlier migrations, this later Mennonite immigration concentrated in Waterloo County and adjacent areas of southwestern Ontario. Thus, by 1840 Upper Canada possessed 5,400 Mennonite settlers.¹³ Their success in establishing their farms and villages prompted other Germans to follow. In the 1830s Lutherans and Catholics began to arrive from Germany. This trend continued until nearly midcentury. According to K.M. McLaughlin, "One result of this development was that by 1833 the area surrounding the original German Company Tract was cleared and settled, a German newspaper had been initiated and a variety of German religious congregations formed. In the midst of this activity the central village in the original Mennonite settlement was re-named Berlin to commemorate the presence of so many newcomers from Germany."¹⁴

Thus, in 1850 most of British North America's German community resided in two general areas, Nova Scotia (15 percent) and Waterloo County in Upper Canada (60 percent). The remaining 25 percent were scattered about Quebec, the Ottawa Valley, and Montreal and Toronto. A community profile at midcentury shows them to have been in large measure faithful to the traditions of their past. A substantial majority of Canada's Germans lived either on their own farms or in small settlements, where they raised their families and worked the land upon which they or their forebears had settled. Those who had moved off the land lived in villages where they plied traditional handicrafts, trades, or small businesses. By modern standards these villages appear quite small. Berlin, the focal point of Waterloo

County's German population in 1850, numbered only about 1,000 souls. Of these Berlin residents, Udo Sauttner claimed that more than 100 artisans worked at various trades.¹⁵

Although eastern Canada did receive additional immigrants from Germany in the 1830s and 1840s, they were too few to alter the general shape of Canada's German community. Canada's German centres remained modest in number, composed mostly of Germans who had lived in North America for some time. The majority exhibited distant rather than immediate connections to Germany proper. This distant connection and small size limited their ability to act as centres for later chain migration from Germany.¹⁶ Moreover, virtually all the German residents of British North America in 1850 had migrated prior to or in the earliest stages of industrialization in Germany and the United States. Because industrialization proceeded rapidly in Germany after the middle of the nineteenth century, subsequent German-Canadian migration was affected by the forces associated with the new industrial technology and the resultant economic, social, and political change. Because the Reich German migrants considered in this study belonged to the post-1850s migrations, they are fundamentally distinguishable from their predecessors.

In distinguishing the post-1850 immigrants, I analyze them and the migration phenomenon from several vantage points. First, the push-pull metaphor describes the larger immigration scene in both the "community of origin" (Germany) and the "community of destination" (Canada). This includes not only broad economic trends (recession or expansion) but demographics and particular political structures as well. As shall be shown, official immigration policy in both Germany and Canada nearly always reflected such broad themes. Some forces, for example, were pushing the would-be emigrant out of Germany, while concurrent influences at home were pulling in the opposite direction to keep the migrant from leaving.¹⁷ Besides taking into consideration push-pull factors, I have adopted from Marcus Hansen four additional categories to account for emigration: 1) the legal freedom to migrate outside the country, 2) the means to do this, 3) the desire to move, and 4) the existence of an acceptable receiving land.¹⁸

In German-Canadian migration these four factors played significant roles. To start with, the laws facilitating or prohibiting migrant ingress and egress changed significantly over the period 1850-1939. The means to migrate include such matters as transportation opportunities, publicity or propaganda to induce movement, agents soliciting Germans for Canada, and facilitation agencies assisting emigrants to leave. Motivation to leave, the third category, relates to available opportunities to depart as well as awareness of the advantages of departing. Most often, the desire to abandon the old land stemmed not only from unhappiness or frustration at home but also from the belief in existing opportunities abroad. That is, how the would-be mi-

grant perceived the receiving land is crucial. This perception, in turn, relates to the important role played by image in Canada's migration drama. Consequently, the following chapters contain considerable discussion of the various images that supporters and detractors ascribed to Canada, and their effects. The actual status of Canada as a viable receiving land for Reich Germans is also discussed, along with how the image of Canada as a home for immigrants evolved in relation to other receiving lands and particularly the United States.

Finally, a major portion of the discussion is allotted to analyzing the nature of German migration to Canada and the ideologies employed to support or oppose it. By nature I mean not only vital statistics categories such as sex, age, vocation, residence in Germany, and marital status but also how the immigration occurred. Did it involve basically family units – married parents with children – or did single individuals make the move to North America independently? Did German migration to Canada exhibit the chain characteristics so often true of German movement to the United States? Ideological considerations are discussed as reasons for supporting or opposing, for justifying or rationalizing migrations in and out. As shall be shown, these arguments included everything from nationalist expansionism through liberal idealism to racist obstructionism.

In treating the period 1850-1939, I divide the German-Canadian migration story into four major chronological segments: the twenty years following 1850, the two decades from 1870 to 1890, the watershed years from 1890 to the Great War, and the interwar period from 1919 to 1939. Although admittedly arbitrary, this division seemed not only convenient but justifiable for several reasons. To begin with, it corresponds to four readily recognizable stages in the political development of both countries. To discuss migration through a structuring political context makes sense because in both countries migration influenced and also was influenced by political posturing and policy making. These four political periods also exhibit economic and social features distinctive enough to merit separation and individual scrutiny. Certainly, social and economic developments related closely to political developments, functioning often as both cause and effect. The labour migration historian Carl Strickwerda encapsulates the intimacy between politics and economics: "International migration is thus always an economic and political phenomenon. The major determinants of international migration have been the economy and the state. The economic forces impinging on migration are demography, technology, the level of wages, and access – geographical proximity, transportation, and communications. The state is the confluence of social and political forces within countries which define, encourage or curtail, and regulate movement across borders. The interaction between these two factors creates the complexities of international migration."¹⁹

The first of the four periods, 1850-70, was a time of unification in both Canada and Germany. At the end of these two decades, in Canada in 1867 and then in Germany in 1870, a tenuous but clear politically unified nation-state was successfully established. Besides the creation of new political forms, political unification made a national system of economics feasible. Such a system ultimately included not only a national market but new commercial codes, tariff policies, transportation systems, and common weights and measures. In Germany more than in Canada these developments facilitated rapid economic advances in new industry and commerce. Even agriculture was affected. Consequently, German labourers and labouring were transformed as new social classes were created and old ones made redundant. After midcentury, the Industrial Revolution spread in Canada, albeit more slowly than in Germany. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Canada's economy remained agrarian and natural-resource based. Not so in Germany, where the rapid and profound changes in politics and economics influenced nearly all facets of people's lives. The social upheaval associated with developing industrialization and rapid demographic growth increased the number of Germany's potential emigrants. At the same time in traditional Canada, the developing national movement became increasingly aware of its need for more citizens. Hence, in the period 1850-70 in both Germany and Canada the potential for major changes in migration policies, procedures, and makeup developed naturally, and the groundwork for the evolution of truly national migration programs was laid. Chapter 1 describes how these several issues affected German-Canadian migration.

Corresponding to the era of two dominant political figures, Otto von Bismarck in Germany and Sir John A. Macdonald in Canada, Chapter 2 covers the two decades from 1870 to 1890. During this period, two apparently unrelated developments occurred that affected the possible movement of Germans to Canada. The first, a serious economic slowdown in the German Empire, saw the end of the rapid growth and expansion of the previous years as well as the emergence of serious social problems in conjunction with the economic downturn. Massive social and economic dislocation created enough difficulties to greatly expand Germany's potential emigrant pool. The second development was Ottawa's acquisition of the extensive Hudson's Bay lands lying between Ontario's Lake of the Woods and British Columbia. Overseen and inspired by Macdonald, this addition completed the physical development of the dominion by adding the North-West Territories. Besides binding west to east, this expansion also presented the dominion with new challenges, not the least of which was how to people the new lands with adequate numbers loyal to Ottawa. From this time, Canada was faced with a much more extensive immigration problem than in any previous age.

Between 1890 and the outbreak of war in August 1914, Canada received more immigrants than in either of the two periods just discussed. The people most responsible for this impressive turnaround were the Liberal prime minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his minister in charge of immigration, Clifford Sifton. Recognizing, as Macdonald had, that the West could not survive as a vital part of Canada unless it were populated, Laurier and Sifton deviated sharply from Macdonald's traditional emphasis upon seeking new immigrants among the English-speaking population of the British Isles and the United States. The Liberal government committed substantial resources and effort to soliciting settlers for the North West among non-English peoples, particularly those residing in central and eastern Europe. As a direct result of their liberalizing efforts, large numbers of Slavs and Germans from Russia and the Hapsburg lands made their way to Canada's newest frontier. Although the new Laurier-Sifton policy applied to Reich Germans as well, it enjoyed very limited success there. Chapter 3 treats the migration events and developments occurring during the two and a half decades before 1914.

Although the Great War halted German migration to Canada, it resumed not long after the conflict ended. Chapter 4 covers this period, ending with the second absolute cessation of that movement in 1939 at the outbreak of the Second World War. Although from 1919 to 1939 significant numbers of Reich Germans were admitted to Canada, most migrated there between 1923 and 1929. In those seven years, young Germans particularly flocked to Canada and other receiving lands because postwar conditions in the Weimar Republic were so politically unstable, socially chaotic, and economically uncertain. When the worldwide Depression commenced, out-migration ceased to exist as an option for the down and out. This was due less to the failing will of Germany's intended migrants than to the changing conditions in the receiving lands. Themselves suffering from the Depression, Canada, the United States, and the other traditional receiving lands effectively closed their doors to immigration. Germany's solution to both the Depression and the desire of its people to emigrate came in the form of Hitler's public works and rearmament program. As a result, the often expressed need for a way to relieve social pressure caused by a faltering economy, which emigration had previously fulfilled, disappeared as well.

This study was never meant to be a complete account of German migration to Canada or a history of Germans in Canada. I have deliberately not gone into detail on how German immigrants were received by the non-German Canadian community, nor attempted to describe how they were assimilated or integrated into Canadian society. Their role in Canadian life and their contribution to Canada represents an entirely different subject. Furthermore, I do not deal with all the different groups of German speakers who immigrated to Canada between 1850 and 1939. Although on occasion

I have discussed the so-called *Volksdeutsche*, those German speakers who before their migration to Canada resided outside of Germany proper, such as in Austro-Hungary, Russia, or the United States, I have concentrated on Germans hailing from “traditional” Germany, that is, from the Holy Roman Empire, the German Confederation, Bismarck’s and then Wilhelm II’s Second Empire, the Weimar Republic, and to a very limited extent Hitler’s Germany. Because I am concerned equally here with events in Germany and in Canada, the work is intended to be a contribution to migration studies in general.

Moreover, I have not attempted to treat remigration, or *Rückwanderung*; that is, the returning of immigrants from Canada to Germany. Certainly, remigration represents an important element in the general migration story. The volume of recent literature devoted to it attests to this.²⁰ Just as clearly, a number of Canada’s German immigrants did migrate back to Germany during the period 1850-1930. Indeed, some Canadian “immigrant trunks” also returned home to the old country as “a piece of that dream which once drew an emigrant across the sea.”²¹ In several places, I note examples of such remigration during the interwar period.

Nevertheless, I have dealt with Canada’s returning Germans peripherally for two basic reasons. First, the subject remains particularly elusive because the available relevant statistics are notoriously unreliable and incomplete for both Germany and Canada. Confronted with the same statistical quandary for computing America’s German remigration for the period up to 1890, Walter Nugent could only surmise that America’s German migrants, who were in the majority farmers, probably showed low levels of return migration. In this regard, they appeared to resemble their fellow Irish and Scandinavian immigrants and to differ from America’s British and Italian non-farmer, labour-seeking immigrants, who exhibited much higher levels of return migration.²² Since the majority of Germans who came to Canada between 1850 and 1914 were, as we shall see, by official definition land seekers, what Nugent deduced about Germans in the United States very likely paralleled what happened in Canada.

Second, the subject’s scope and scale exceeds the limits of this work. To treat Canada’s German *Rückwanderung* appropriately would have required a much more extensive investigation into the circumstances surrounding the immigrants in Canada: the host society’s responses to them, their assimilation or adjustment as immigrants, in short, their fate while living amid Canadian society. Since my effort has been directed at disclosing the causes and forces that prompted and facilitated the original move to Canada, a discussion of remigration appeared inessential to my main object, namely explaining why and how German migration to Canada occurred as it did.

Finally, the book makes no pretence to provide an in-depth history of either Canadian or German migration policy. Nevertheless, in each section

I have tried to include information about basic migration policies in the two lands to provide a workable theoretical framework for understanding how migration was viewed and why it was pursued or opposed by the governors in both countries.

This book is about Germans from Germany migrating to Canada between 1850 and 1939. More to the point, it deals with the reasons why Germans from Germany selected Canada as their receiving land, how the Canadian government both perceived and dealt with them as immigrants, why they left Germany, who assisted them in leaving and, finally, how they made the trip across the ocean to Canada. As such, it concerns itself with what happened in Germany as much as with events in Canada. From its inception then, the work was intended to be a contribution to migration studies more than to the literature of Germans in Canada.

1

Migration in the 1850s and 1860s

In the two decades after 1850, the movement of Germans to Canada became increasingly distinguishable from earlier migrations. The explanation for this is straightforward: in both British North America and the German Confederation the first modernizing effects of the Industrial Revolution were being felt. Although more apparent in Germany than Canada at this time, the Industrial Revolution nevertheless affected economic growth, technological advances, social restructuring, and political evolution either directly or indirectly in both lands. In so doing, it necessarily influenced migrant makeup, motivations, and opportunities. Because for generations governments had considered the movement of their subjects important and consequently had sought to control such movement, it seems appropriate to begin by considering the political context for the movement of peoples from the German states to British North America at the midpoint of the nineteenth century.

The Political Background

In the generation after midcentury, Canadian and German politics reveal some interesting and suggestive parallels. Both states had experienced political upheavals in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Canada in 1837 and Germany in 1830 and 1848. Both countries were politically disunited in 1850 and tugged at by opposing political forces: Austria and Prussia for the multiple German states, and England and the United States for the several parts of British North America. After 1850 both countries, although divided by regional and religious differences, nevertheless experienced the rapid growth of modern national consciousness in the two decades; in both countries the threat of war pushed the unity movement forward; and finally, by 1870 both Germany and Canada had forged the first stages of successful political unification. All these political developments helped shape the traditional push-pull forces influencing German-Canadian migration.

Despite the political reaction that dominated Germany in the 1850s, the defeat of the 1848 liberal nationalists had not quashed the ideal of German unification.¹ The unity movement re-emerged with new vigour after 1860. Indeed, the period from 1860 to the proclamation of the German Empire at Versailles in January 1871 witnessed a dramatic reduction of traditional German particularism. The old, loose German Confederation was replaced first by the North German Confederation and then by the Empire of Bismarck and Wilhelm I.² By the time Wilhelm I acceded to the imperial office in 1871, the German states had suffered through two decades of revolution, reaction, war, and precipitous unification. Now the daunting task of forging administrative and political unity remained. Although the country's political state following the Franco-Prussian War may have satisfied nationalists, Prussians, or converted liberals, other significant groups including socialists, Catholics, doctrinaire liberals, and South Germans viewed the future with less equanimity.³ Unsurprisingly, the years between 1850 and 1870, with their early stifling political oppression, followed by the uncertainty of multiple wars and major political reshuffling, and finally the abrupt imposition of new political institutions, saw the continuation of mass migration out of the German homeland to new political environs in the United States, Australia, and Canada.⁴

At the same time that Bismarck was crafting the new Germany, British North America was experiencing political transformation. The historic conflict between English Upper Canada and French Lower Canada, the independent attitudes of the Maritime provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, as well as Newfoundland, and the sheer distance of British Columbia from the east continued to frustrate national unity. In Canada, the most populous province, the sectional and religious split between the two founding national groups, institutionalized in the province's system of political dualism, had all but paralyzed politics at midcentury. This paralysis in Upper and Lower Canada in some ways paralleled the German North-South, Prussian-Austrian stand-off taking place at roughly the same time. Despite these political problems, fundamental forces for changing the political order in British North America were at work, just as they were in the former Holy Roman Empire.⁵

Moreover, in British North America as in Germany, an external state unduly influenced political developments. In British North America, the United States exerted the pressure for change. Caught up in its own sectionalisms, which inspired an aggressive expansionism not only into the Mexican-controlled southwest but also to the north and west, the United States in the 1840s and 1850s assumed an ever more menacing posture to many British North Americans. Manifested earlier in the Oregon and Maine boundary disputes, the American threat now appeared in an aggressive expansion onto the northern plains adjacent to the unsettled British-controlled lands

stretching from Lake of the Woods to the Crown colony in British Columbia. The American Civil War intensified the apparent threat to the point where the several parts of British America felt endangered enough to draw together.⁶

Although fear of war with the United States did much to bind British Americans together emotionally and to stimulate a nascent nationalism, by itself hostility toward the United States was insufficient to effect political unity. Other, less emotional factors contributed to the development of a viable Canadian unification movement at the beginning of the 1860s. British willingness to support self-determination in British North America was one. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, the grant of responsible government in 1848, and the removal of the Navigation Acts in 1849 all provided evidence of such willingness. Furthermore, the reciprocity treaty that Canada negotiated with the United States in 1854 indicated an expanding British North American desire for increased self-determination. Of even greater importance to the feasibility of British North American unity, however, was the appearance of new technology, in the form of the steamboat and what J.B. Brebner labels that "great, impersonal, international engine of earth conquest, the railway itself."⁷ Appearing initially in British North America in the 1840s, the railroad expanded significantly in the next decade. By 1856 the plans for the Grand Trunk Railway, a rail link from Lake Huron to the Atlantic Ocean, had been laid out and the central section from Toronto to Montreal was already completed. The physical barrier of distance that had separated the region since its settlement had thus begun to come down, making the vision of a united British America seem plausible for the first time. Finally, the social context seemed favourable; as David Gagen argues, a social crisis in Canada West involving inadequate land for new settlers plus declining opportunities for those already settled had generated "popular interest in confederation and its territorial objectives."⁸

With the stars thus in conjunction, efforts to realize this vision began in the early 1860s. Several dramatic events facilitated the union movement. A new coalition government in Canada led by John A. Macdonald of Upper Canada and George-Étienne Cartier of Lower Canada, the publication by this government of a proposal for a general British American federation, and the surprising willingness of the Maritime provinces (Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in particular) to allow representatives from Canada to attend their constitutional conference in Charlottetown in September 1864 constituted "the greatest breakthrough in British American political history."⁹ The Charlottetown meetings were followed over the next several years by additional conferences in North America and in London, culminating in July 1867 with the establishment of the Dominion of Canada. The dominion originally comprised three provinces: Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.¹⁰ With a Canadian federal framework in place, Macdonald,

the first prime minister of the new dominion, lost no time in developing not only the ideal but the reality of the Canadian nation-state.¹¹ Under his leadership, the province of Manitoba and the North-West Territories were added to the dominion in 1870, British Columbia in 1871, and Prince Edward Island in 1873. All these lands, but particularly the newest areas of Canadian settlement in the west, needed economic development and people to make them viable political entities.

Confederation supporters understood the importance of immigration. Initially the British North America Act placed immigration and agriculture under the concurrent jurisdictions of the federal and provincial governments. This linking of agriculture and immigration followed logically from the assumption that the vast majority of those ultimately settling the West would be farmers. It did not take long to recognize that the federal government should be granted more extensive powers in controlling and directing immigration, and the first federal Immigration Act, passed in 1869, placed regulating immigration squarely in the hands of the federal government. Ottawa could now regulate conditions on board ships landing immigrants in Canada, as well as restrict undesirables such as paupers, criminals, or the disabled from entering the country. In addition, the Dominion Lands Act of 1872 placed control of the western lands exclusively with the federal government. Thus, a system to receive immigrants and to provide for them was in place when the Macdonald government unveiled its National Policy in the next decade.¹²

The Economic Context

Whether enough people could be induced to migrate to Canada and settle the West depended on a variety of factors. For German migrants, two of the most significant were the material promises of Canada and the concurrent economic conditions in Germany. Like the political order, the German economy experienced great changes in the period 1850-70. Although its widely hailed industrialization process had begun well before, the real industrial take-off period in Germany did not begin until the 1850s.¹³ Equally fundamental alterations in agricultural procedures and output paralleled the far-reaching changes happening in industrial organization and production. The two spheres of agriculture and industry had reciprocal influences on each other and both were in turn profoundly affected by a Europe-wide demographic revolution that increased Germany's population by nearly 60 percent between 1816 and 1865.

A dynamic and complex affair, German industrialization produced in the first two decades after midcentury a market economy growing at a rate of over 2.5 percent a year. A significant heavy industrial sector of iron, steel, and coal developed. Closely associated with these burgeoning industries, as both cause and effect, was the huge expansion of Germany's railways.¹⁴ With

the spectacular growth of the rail system came, in turn, expansion in subsidiary industries such as engineering, metallurgy, and building construction. Consumer goods production took off as well; textiles, leather goods, glassware, and ceramics all experienced rapid expansion, as did the food and drink processing industries. Investment capital from a newly developing banking system financed both industrial and consumer goods production. And to accommodate the economy's increased scale and complexity, new and more sophisticated business forms emerged, such as joint stock companies and interlocking directorates.¹⁵

As new factories and businesses appeared in record numbers, the demand for labour grew proportionately. While creating some job opportunities, these new factories rendered obsolescent much traditional industrial work. For example, proto-industries such as linen cloth manufacturing were ruined, causing deindustrialization in rural areas of Germany heavily dependent on such cottage work.¹⁶ Labour became more fluid as record numbers of workers moved into newly developing occupations. This changed Germany's traditional residential patterns, as Germans seeking industrial opportunities migrated from rural settings into towns or from towns into larger cities. This rural to urban migration signalled an equally profound transformation in German agriculture.¹⁷

Recent studies have emphasized the fundamental, concurrent, and even parallel changes in agriculture that both stimulated Germany's industrial transformation and developed as a response to it. In effect a kind of agricultural revolution occurred at the same time industrialization took off. The basis of this agricultural revolution lay in the widespread introduction of root-crop cultivation. J.A. Perkins succinctly insists that "the really outstanding feature of German agriculture from the 1850s was the considerable expansion of the acres devoted to root-crops and in particular to potatoes and sugar beets."¹⁸ The widespread introduction of root crops greatly speeded up the transition from traditional open field cultivation to enclosed holdings, which tended to be more extensive. The movement toward increased scale or size occurred not only in the east but in central and western Germany as well. With the switch to root crops came changes in procedures for working the land, and reliance on fertilizers, especially potash, spread. Expanding root-crop cultivation also meant new sources for livestock fodder, which in turn expanded animal husbandry. Finally, these changes, like the concurrent innovations in industry, created new demands for capital to finance the transformation. As a result of this rush to root-crop cultivation, Germany's agriculture became "permeated with capitalist attitudes and practices."¹⁹

As landholding practices altered, crop rotations became obsolete, and production costs increased, agricultural labour changed also. Large-scale grain growing in the east and the spread of root-crop cultivation elsewhere affected labour practices and labourers in two fundamental ways. First, where

large-scale capitalist-inspired cultivation existed, the traditional peasant ways of farming tended to disappear. With the abolition of serfdom, completed by 1850, Germany's former serfs had been set free not only from obligations to their lords but from certain rights to the land. Without the customary security of place, the newly emancipated peasant was forced to fend for himself, and peasants were gradually replaced by wage labourers. Second, because the old ties had been severed at the same time that new agricultural processes appeared, Germany's farmers were able to move on to new work. Although migration of agricultural workers had occurred for centuries in Germany, the scale of the movement now surpassed earlier levels, as migratory, often seasonal, agricultural labour became typical. The mass movement of displaced agricultural workers also expressed itself in new migratory patterns, especially in movement from east to west. Displaced or redundant, they abandoned their ancestral homes to seek work in other agricultural districts or in the new urban industries. Many of those hired for farm work as wage labourers thus became rural replicas of those who toiled for wages in the new factories. Unfortunately, the employment opportunities in the new industrial and revamped agricultural sectors were inadequate to absorb the surplus labour force created by the demographic upswing and the recent developments in agriculture and industry that had displaced so many artisans and agricultural workers.²⁰

During the two decades after 1850, Canada's economic development appeared neither as dramatic nor as innovative as Germany's.²¹ Canada's slower growth had much to do with the strength of the traditional conservative myth that envisioned Canada as primarily "a pastoral society composed of sturdy yeoman farmers surrounded by comfortable houses and a real sense of community."²² In fact, at Confederation 80 percent of Canadians laboured in the primary spheres of fishing, farming, and lumbering. Canada did develop some new industry in this period: in Lower Canada paper products, leather goods, glassware, and steam engines were being produced. Elsewhere in British North America, however, proto-industries appeared far more common than modern enterprises. As late as the 1860s "grist mills and sawmills, which were linked so closely to the old staple trades, still accounted for forty percent of British American manufacturing."²³

Although Canada's industrial development appeared modest compared to Germany's, the country showed, as noted above, an impressive advance in transportation technology and infrastructure. Although limited resources had hampered railroad construction before 1850, the subsequent period witnessed a veritable railroad boom.²⁴ The expansion of the rail system, in turn, stimulated growth not only in related industries but also in agriculture. By tying the distant parts of the Canadian farm economy to the country's growing population centres, rail lines greatly advanced marketing possibilities for formerly isolated frontier producers. The use of steamships also grew

proportionately, further facilitating the flow of goods and services to the west along the St. Lawrence River and on the Great Lakes. New roads hacked into the country's undeveloped areas opened up additional opportunities for developing farms, mines, and timber operations. And as these changes occurred, the population of British North America increased by 50 percent, rising from 2.4 million to 3.6 million between 1850 and 1870. This growth decreed that if the economic advances of the previous decades were to continue, Canada would need to locate new lands to settle and additional people to settle them.²⁵

Canadian Immigration Policy

Although crucial to Canada's existence, Canadian immigration policy was plagued from the beginning by what Reg Whitaker describes as a "persistent lack of clarity on the one hand" and "a diffusion and fragmentation of responsibility for formulating, executing and enforcing immigration policy between the public and private sectors and between the federal and provincial levels of government" on the other.²⁶

Such an absence of clarity and apparent fragmentation certainly existed in the period 1850-70, as evidenced by the public pronouncements of Canada's politicians. For example, when the subject of immigration was broached in the debates of the Legislative Council of the United Province of Canada in the early 1860s, the commentators indicated either concern over the absence of a forthright government policy or limited expectations from any program that might or should exist. To those who complained that not enough was being done to solicit immigrants or to provide opportunities for them once in Canada, immigration opponents responded that the role of government included neither sponsoring nor chaperoning such people. They argued that the country did not need to recruit new settlers nor, once the newcomers had arrived, "to provide them with the means of subsistence, to watch over them, and to see that they did not suffer by their want of success in clearing their farms." In brief, "all that could be expected from the Government was that they [the government] should open up roads into the unsettled lands of the Crown and to offer these lands at a reasonable price." While some urged sending agents to Europe to solicit, skeptics wrote the idea off as foolishly counterproductive: "To send agents to the old country to lecture to the people, and tell them that the Government was ready and anxious to give them large tracts of good land, if they would but spend their little all in reaching these shores, and to have large numbers of people act upon this information, only to be disappointed and disgusted and perhaps, to starve to death, was the very best way possible to check immigration." To be successful, the critics argued, immigration must be induced by private sources, not government officials: "The best immigration agents were those who immigrated to the Province many years ago, and who, in writing home

letters to their friends, were in a position to tell them of the advantages the country possessed in the way of bettering the condition of those who might come here."²⁷

With Confederation, the immigration debate intensified. As the pressure mounted for Canadian expansion westward, advocates began calling for a more aggressive immigration policy. Senators voiced concerns that local governments could not provide the cheap lands required to convince immigrants to settle in the dominion, and demanded that Ottawa intervene actively with both a new federal lands policy promising such cheap land and a new approach to immigrant solicitation in Europe. The parliamentary debates for May 1868, for example, reported that while visiting Europe Senator Macpherson had noted how

emigration was conducted there [by the Americans]. He found at all the leading ports both consuls and shipping agents very busy in inducing men to emigrate to the United States. Numerous placards were posted up, offering free lands in the most attractive part of the United States to those who would emigrate and the consuls were acting as emigration agents as all should do. It was a great mistake made by this country in not having qualified emigration agents in Europe; if we had sent such agents there as were sent by the United States, the Minister of Immigration would not have had to make the mortifying statement which he had had to make today, [namely, that] the tide of immigration is now setting strongly towards the Western States and it would be very difficult to change it.²⁸

Unfortunately for Macpherson and those who shared his views, the unclear or nonexistent Canadian immigration policy in Germany and Europe continued for several more years.

The lack of a German recruitment policy in Canada prompted private Germans to volunteer their immigrant-proselytizing services to Ottawa. Some of the proposals included explicit policy guidelines. For example, in the fall of 1868, Dr. Becker, a former British army surgeon and veteran of the Crimean War living in Colchester, England, wrote to Governor General Viscount Monck to suggest that "if Ottawa would only offer 100 acres of land to every head of a family and to every male child by 18 years old," this would "induce thousands of people, instead of going to the United States to settle in British territory." The surgeon continued, "It would without a shadow of a doubt revolutionize the present immigration," causing "thousands to ascend the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers and settle, wherever the Colonial Government should see fit." The people Becker had in mind were his own Germans: "It is particularly the German population which I intend to choose Canada as their future home. They are small people, of small means, but still industrious and honest, not likely to shirk back from the first year's

hardships." He concluded by offering his own professional services: "The scheme would work well under an appointed general Agent who by his personal knowledge of the different localities in Germany and their people, would be able to demonstrate to them the advantages of a colony under British rule, rather than under a Republican government. All this I would do with pleasure and come with them if the Government would allow a free passage for me and my family."²⁹

Another epistle from March 1869 to the minister of agriculture from William Raich, editor and publisher of the *German Canadian* in Waterloo, Ontario, echoed Dr. Becker's sentiments. Raich urged Minister Jean-Charles Chapais that "if Your Honor has not agreed upon any certain plan [for soliciting German immigrants in Germany] I would offer my services to you and encourage my countrymen in Germany to come to Canada." Claiming to have been in Germany in 1867 delivering public lectures on behalf of several western US states, Raich assured the minister that he was not only thoroughly informed on matters in Germany but on Canada as well. "I am most sure," he insisted, "that this [a public lecture] is the best way of routing information to the Germans and they are a pretty good class of settlers, which we want in Canada." And the cost of his services would be most reasonable: "The Salary, Traveling Expense, Printing ... would amount to about \$7.00 per day or \$2500 per year for which I could deliver about 200 lectures in the different cities of North, Middle and South Germany and give all information required by those who want to come to Canada."³⁰ Letters like these did not cease until a more clearly enunciated immigration program took shape.

Migration Morphology: Nature and Causes

Unlike Canada, Germany suffered no dearth of people in 1850. As noted, the German states had been experiencing the larger European demographic revolution for nearly a century. Although many causes have been suggested to explain this population increase, a declining mortality rate seems to have been the most significant factor for Germany, as elsewhere. In any case, between 1816 and 1865 the population of the German states (Prussia plus the Confederation) grew from about thirty-two million to fifty-two million, an increase of over 60 percent. Population density in the individual states expanded accordingly, although considerable variety existed in growth rates from state to state. As the century progressed, a pattern describing this population explosion appeared in the form of regional shifts. In the two decades after 1850, the movement shifted away from the northwest, south, and southwest toward the Rhineland and the northeast.

As with the general population expansion, the suggested causes for the regional variations have been several. Although increasing fertility rates or sympathetic public policy may have contributed to the faster growth of

some regions, local and internal conditions were not the only determinants. External factors such as migration often played equally significant roles. Indeed, the movement of people across the landscape, whether as external emigration or as internal movement from one part of Germany to another, particularly distinguished the second half of the nineteenth century. Migration within Germany could be traditional, as when agricultural workers travelled from one rural setting to another to find work, or it could be into the cities or towns offering new employment opportunities. Involving more effort and greater distances, emigration represented an even more dramatic change of circumstances. Although overseas emigration had occurred at earlier times, the new feature in the mid-nineteenth century was the volume of those moving out of Germany entirely. The first great surge of emigration began in 1845 and continued into the mid-1850s. In 1854 alone over a quarter of a million departed. Over a million people left Germany between 1845 and 1858. Then numbers declined until 1864, when a second major movement began. Continuing until the economic crisis of 1873, this renewed exodus saw another million leave.

The abolition of traditional strictures designed to prevent emigration proved to be crucial to this enhanced movement. Customarily, Europe's mercantilists had equated the state's well-being (its wealth and power) with healthy population numbers. Mercantilist theory therefore justified any state act that would guarantee such numbers, including limiting the movement of individual subjects. The legacy of eighteenth-century liberal political as well as economic and social theory clearly undermined the mercantilist belief in the state's power to manipulate population to the state's benefit. Although the post-Napoleonic period witnessed an effort to restore the *ancien régime*, with its hierarchical social order and controlled economy, the liberal concept of free movement advanced nevertheless. This liberal advance also occurred in the newly created German Confederation.

There, the decline of the state's documentary control over individual movement, which extended back to the fifteenth century, moved forward step by step as the nineteenth century itself advanced. Although the several German states were quite reluctant to abandon police surveillance, visas, passports, and residency requirements, the labour needs of the emerging capitalist economy necessitated a relaxation of such controls. Deregulation progressed from a modest loosening of the process by which passports were acquired, to agreements among several states authorizing limited movement (e.g., the Pass Card Treaty of 1850) to outright abolition of passports by several states including Saxony, Bavaria, and Württemberg in 1865. This progressive relaxation climaxed with the decriminalization of movement in the Passport Law passed by the North German Confederation in 1867. The German elimination or reduction of passport restrictions was duplicated elsewhere in Europe. This widespread opening-up contributed directly

to the great Atlantic migration that reached its crescendo in the two generations preceding the Great War.³¹

Emigrants' reasons for leaving Germany varied. The usual explanations included seeking political asylum, religious freedom, opportunities for adventure, social security, or economic opportunity. All emigrants, however, had to make the wrenching decision to sever ties with their native land. As Peter Marschalck describes the process, "Whatever the motives – as various as they were – they could only lead to emigration if the would-be emigrant had resolved to cut himself loose from the homeland and if a land existed elsewhere that offered him the same employment opportunities in agriculture or handicrafts that had existed previously in the old country."³² The specific motives prompting Germans to leave in the period 1850-70 were generally not religious, political, or adventuresome, but basically social and economic. The rapid population growth, plus the changes in landholding practices and the decline of the artisan trades described above, all exerted pressure on the traditional social and economic systems. Germany's rural, small-village population, and most notably small landholders and landless agricultural workers, together with marginalized artisans and redundant proto-industrial workers, experienced the most intense economic pressure to emigrate.³³ Klaus Bade sums up the situation thus: "The immigrant ships were filled with those social groups caught up in the maelstrom of social and economic change who tried to escape the misery which characterized the reserve army of the hopelessly unemployed."³⁴ Because the recently begun industrialization had not advanced far enough to absorb these declassed groups, they had few options other than leaving.

These emigrants were mostly family units. In general, families migrated after having been pushed out of their native land more than because they were pulled to the new homeland. Overwhelmingly, the first wave of Germans leaving in the early 1850s was composed of small peasants and artisans fleeing the economic distress that burdened the overpopulated rural southwestern states of Baden, Württemberg, and the Palatinate. The second emigrant wave, beginning in the 1860s, again included significant numbers from agricultural areas in the west, but increasingly former peasants from the east and northeast appeared among those leaving. By the end of the 1860s, for example, Mecklenburg, the eastern provinces of Prussia, and Saxony had all lost nearly a third of their agricultural workers to migration.

As the geographic origin of the emigrants shifted to the north and east, typical immigrant family and marital status changed also. Although statistics from the period 1850-70 are more incomplete than those of later times, enough partial data exist to allow a measure of sex and age determination. The available data indicate that persons under the age of ten made up about 20 percent of the emigrant population between 1850 and 1870. The impli-

cations of this are clear: families, rather than individuals travelling alone, composed the majority of German emigrants in the first several decades after 1850. The prevalence of children further confirms the picture of small freeholding families leaving Germany because "they could not, despite the existence of cottage industry, earn enough to survive."³⁵ This preindustrial emigration declined only toward the end of the 1860s, when the number of independent small farmers and artisan families among the departing started to drop off. Meanwhile, as Germany's industrialization progressed, the proportion of unmarried, landless agricultural workers and factory labourers in the emigrant population expanded.

The overwhelming majority, nearly 85 percent, of Germans emigrating in the decades 1850-70 headed for the United States, where they believed the best opportunities in agriculture or the traditional handicrafts lay. But a significant proportion of the remaining 15 percent selected the British provinces as their North American destination. Marschalck estimates that between 1851 and 1870 some 1,749,200 Germans immigrated to the United States while Canada received 52,400 new Germans.³⁶ And Canada, as noted, needed people. In 1850 British North America, which in size exceeded the whole of western Europe, possessed a population of less than two and a half million. Despite steady immigration from Europe, which between 1850 and 1870 totalled just under half a million souls, the population of Canada grew relatively slowly after 1850. The large numbers of Canadians migrating to the United States during this period offset the immigrants entering the dominion.³⁷

Migrants and Images

Although the vast majority of the half-million immigrants entering Canada at this time hailed from the British Isles, a small percentage emigrated from Germany. A precise calculation of Germans who settled permanently in British North America is difficult to make. Many ship ledgers recording immigrants coming to Canada did not describe their German passengers as Germans.³⁸ On British ships there were only four nationality categories: English, Scottish, Irish, and Foreigner. Moreover, many of the "foreigner" Germans who landed in New Brunswick or Quebec headed straight for the United States, using Canada only as a transit zone. Nevertheless, some of the arrivals remained in Canada. The best estimates suggest that about a third of those immigrants who either landed in Canada directly from Europe or entered from the United States settled in British North America. This low German retention rate nevertheless greatly exceeded that for the Norwegian migrants who entered Quebec as part of the contemporaneous Norwegian-Canadian timber exchange. Almost all of the nearly 100,000 Norwegian immigrants who landed at Quebec between 1850 and 1874 moved on to homesteads in Wisconsin and Iowa.³⁹

For the Germans, a report covering the years 1846 to 1861 described 50,644 Germans disembarking at Quebec. Of these, 16,370 stayed on in Canada. The vast majority of newly arrived Germans who did put down roots between 1850 and 1870 ended up in Upper Canada, where they joined the majority English-speaking element residing along the shores of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes to the west. In his report for 1863 the Prussian consul in Quebec, Gustav Beling, listed only 672 of 23,578 German-born residents in Canada as living in French-speaking Lower Canada.⁴⁰ Most who migrated to Canada in this period came as immigrant families rather than as individuals. For example, of the passengers delivered to Quebec in 1868 from Bremen, 39 percent were under ten years old; from Hamburg in the same year the figure reached almost 49 percent; while in 1869 children under ten constituted just over 18 percent of passengers from Bremen.⁴¹

Why Germans chose British North America in general and specifically Upper Canada depended on several factors, including chance. As with nearly all transoceanic migrations, the decision was influenced by the general economic conditions in the sending and receiving lands and the political climate affecting whether they would be able to leave the old world and enter the new. Free Canadian land available for any intended settler certainly acted as a powerful inducement, but the reasons many emigrants ended up in Canada can only be described as fortuitous. Those, for example, who intended to settle in the United States but landed in Quebec rather than New York and then decided after disembarking, for whatever reason, to remain in Canada would qualify as fortuitous emigrants. Evidence indicates significant numbers of these. Reasons for remaining in Canada ranged from insufficient funds to finish the original journey, to fatigue or sickness caused by the voyage from Germany that prevented further travel, to approval of the country and people encountered in Canada that induced them to stay on.

Besides the absence of a clear Canadian immigration policy, three main reasons explain why so few German emigrants heading for North America chose Canada for settlement: the nearly irresistible lure of the American republic for many Germans, the deep-seated ignorance of Canada and things Canadian in Germany, and the negative image of Canada held throughout much of Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century. The powerful, indeed magnetic, draw of "America," which could be traced back several generations, provided the basis for the successful recruitment of German emigrants by the several US states. Compared to Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Missouri had developed by midcentury much more comprehensive and sophisticated recruitment practices. Canada could simply not compete on the same level. The ignorance of Canada and the negative image problem in Europe and Germany were interrelated, and both had existed for some time. Fundamental to this negative image was climate, which,

as Mabel Timlin puts it, "for many years had been an enemy to Canadian immigration."⁴² In England, Kipling's vision of Canada as "Our Lady of the Snows" held sway long before he published his poem. In France, Voltaire's popularization of Canada as a frozen land inhabited by savages endured. In nineteenth-century Germany, the popular view considered Canada merely "a land of snow and ice with bears, wolves, and reindeer," a frozen, wild, primitive place "unsuitable for European settlement or culture."⁴³ An article in Rudolstadt's *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* (General Emigration Newspaper) in August 1865 complained how difficult it was to counter the popular prejudice in Germany that in Canada "it is so cold the blood stops circulating and even the mercury [in the thermometers] freezes."⁴⁴

When one ponders the real motivations behind the emigration at mid-century, Canada's negative image in Germany assumes even greater importance. Most historians who have considered this emigration agree that fundamental social and economic forces in Germany drove the out-migration: the threat of pauperization and precipitous social decline pushed these emigrants out of Europe. They migrated to America, as Rheinhard Doerries puts it, not because they were pulled there by outstanding opportunities but because they were literally driven out of their native land. In America at midcentury economic and social conditions were not appreciably better than they had been before 1850. If the American pull were, as Doerries contends, not determinative, why then did so many Germans head for the United States and ignore settlement opportunities in Canada? All things being equal on the pull side of the equation, it would seem that more Germans should have been ready to try Canada as their new homeland. That they did not can be explained not only by the absence of a clear German immigration policy in Ottawa but also by the widespread ignorance of Canada in Germany and by the negative associations that British North America conjured up in the minds of many Germans.⁴⁵

Before Canada could improve its drawing power, it had to be able to compete with the United States. From the beginning, this posed a serious, if not insurmountable, obstacle because the American apologists had been aggressively promoting the United States in Germany for more than a generation before Canada's officials decided to commence soliciting emigrants there. The version of America then circulating in Germany was both older and based upon more varied sources, which complicated the Canadian task of creating an image as attractive as the American one. The fascinating, and for some compellingly attractive, picture of America circulating in Germany in 1850 owed its existence not only to official American accounts but also to the efforts of Germany's own literary figures.

The majority of official American accounts designed to lure German settlers were produced not by the federal government but by individual

states seeking to fill their undeveloped lands. State officers believed, as Philip Taylor writes, that the state's "growth and prosperity depended largely upon the contribution immigrants could make in settling its land and building up its industry."⁴⁶ Michigan and Wisconsin set the pace, but many other states, including Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Texas, Ohio, West Virginia, Oregon, Nebraska, Louisiana, and Tennessee, joined in the promotion effort, and competition among them could be intense.⁴⁷ In the period 1850-70, the several states advertised most often for agricultural immigrants, although after the Civil War industrial workers were increasingly sought by some. Not until the closing of the American frontier in 1890 did solicitation begin to switch over from agricultural to large-scale industrial immigration. After 1850 the railroads and steamship lines joined the states in the solicitation effort. Often the states and the transportation companies published their own brochures and advertised in German newspapers. The American image was also conveyed throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by letters from immigrants living in the United States to friends and relatives back home.⁴⁸

Most often, propaganda emphasized the high standard of living enjoyed by Americans, and specifically the economic advantages of migrating to the United States. In its publications, for example, Wisconsin described the state's natural resources, population, vocational opportunities, and land policies rather than political institutions or educational traditions.⁴⁹ American prosperity, these sources emphasized, derived in large measure from the land's natural wealth. The country had extensive mineral deposits, valuable timber reserves, and superior soil for growing everything from wheat to apples. In the United States, land was available to the would-be settler either free of charge or for a nominal sum. Any immigrant, regardless of personal wealth, could realize material well-being in this "land of unlimited opportunities"; the only requirement for success was determination and hard work. And once ensconced in America, the new citizen would enjoy a social equality and mobility unlike anything available in Europe. As one immigrant wrote home, in America "no one takes off his hat to another as you do in Germany."⁵⁰

Nearly equal in importance to the propaganda produced by the states and transportation firms for shaping German opinion was the romanticized frontier literary tradition exported to Germany from America. Although not the first to write about the US frontier, James Fenimore Cooper was nevertheless "the first to seize upon and exploit this immeasurable wealth of literary material."⁵¹ Cooper's works, which described noble Native Americans and rough, natural frontier people, gave Europeans a supposedly in-depth look at frontier life in the new republic across the sea. Such novels as *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Prairie* (1827), and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) spread Cooper's fame throughout Europe, and a kind of Cooper mania swept

Germany in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.⁵² Cooper's German readers included not simply the educated middle class but large numbers of society's literate lower orders as well.

Cooper's popularity in Germany may be attributable to several causes. One factor was the contemporary German political context, for the years between 1815 and 1848 were characterized by repression and reaction. The chaos of early industrialization and economic change no doubt also played a role. To youthful spirits suffering in Germany's stifling climate, the primeval forests of Cooper's novels appeared as a fresh, invigorating, free place for vicarious escape. This period also witnessed the flowering of Germany's own romantic literary movement. In such an environment, the image of Cooper's American Indian, presumably a more realistic version of Rousseau's noble savage, fit in nicely. Cooper's picture of the wild, untrammelled American frontier, and its strong, energetic, natural, and free inhabitants, appealed to Germans who had become disenchanted with their own land; it appealed to what has been labelled the *Europamüdigkeit* (Europe fatigue) of those weary of Germany's allegedly effete civilization.⁵³ Julian Schmidt, a literary historian writing at midcentury, explained the German fascination for Cooper and other depictees of the American wilderness: "From the misery of our own circumstances arises the yearning for primeval forests, Indians, and other products of nature."⁵⁴

The American frontier literary tradition that Cooper introduced to Germany inspired a number of native authors to follow his example, creating a German school of American frontier novelists and travel writers. The five most prominent authors to elaborate on what Cooper had begun were Charles Sealsfield, Otto Rupprius, Friedrich Gerstäcker, Friedrich Armand Strubberg, and Balduin Mollhausen. All these authors had lived in America and experienced the frontier personally before writing about it. Charles Sealsfield (1793-1864), the first German author to write an Indian novel, created in *Der Legitime und der Indianer* (The Lawful and the Indian, 1833), for example, his own version of Cooper's heroes Hawkeye and Chingachgook.⁵⁵ Otto Rupprius (1819-64), who lived on the US frontier for a dozen years, returned to Germany in 1861. In the three years before he died, he produced eight novels celebrating German immigrants on the American frontier. A contemporary of Rupprius, Friedrich Gerstäcker (1816-72), was even more productive, turning out nearly 150 volumes of travelogues and novels dealing with the new world. His most famous work, *Nach Amerika! Ein Volksbuch* (To America! A People's Book) described real-life German immigrants in America. But he also wrote about Indians, frontiersmen, and America's natural landscape. Indeed, A.J. Prahl claims, "Nature and freedom are the two key words which again and again appear in Gerstäcker's writings which deal with the people of the Middle West." Gerstäcker glorified the primitive life led by the westerners in contrast to the unnatural life

of city dwellers and people in Europe, particularly in Germany. Nature and freedom produce in the backwoodsmen and farmers the qualities Gerstäcker admires: "They are affable and courteous, hospitable and subtle, brave and frank, free of earthly anxiety."⁵⁶

Friedrich Armand Strubberg (1806-89) lived a number of years in Texas before starting his literary career in 1858. His first work, *Amerikanische Jagd und Reisenabenteuer aus meinem Leben in den Westlichen Indianergebieten* (American Hunting and Travel Adventures in the Western Indian Territories) described what the title promised – Indians and the frontier. In the twenty years thereafter Strubberg published more than fifty novels dealing with the moving American frontier. Finally, Balduin Mollhausen (1825-1905) also authored over 150 volumes of travel books and novels describing America and concentrated on the frontier. Having lived with Native people and worked for the government as an explorer in the wilderness, Mollhausen came closest to imitating Cooper. *Der Halbindianer und der Majordomo* (The Half-Indian and the Major-domo), for example, contains a version of Cooper's Natty Bumppo.⁵⁷

The great productivity of the Cooper imitators and the widespread enthusiasm for the works of Cooper himself testify to the popularity of the American frontier in mid-nineteenth-century Germany. To the romantic appeal of youth, nature, and adventure that this literature provided for those who felt stifled or weary of their own German context must be added the blood connection. Preston Barba sums up this nexus well: "The demand for such literature is easily explained when we remember that there was hardly a family, even in the remoter villages of Germany, which did not have a member, friend, or relative seeking his fortune in America."⁵⁸ This onslaught of frontier literature supplemented the propaganda materials disseminated by state governments and transportation companies, and personal letters from emigrants, which begins to explain how knowledge of America became so widespread in Germany. This dissemination created not only interest in the United States but also an image of America that combined the promise of wealth and abundance with the titillating challenge of frontier adventure and violence; elements of danger, excitement, and novelty merged with concrete material awards. In short, from the works of the immigration publicists and Cooper-inspired novelists, America emerged, in Ray Billington's words, as a "Land of Savagery, Land of Promise."⁵⁹ This negative/positive image dichotomy was the challenge Canadian apologists confronted.

To contest the American success at winning German emigrants two preconditions had to be fulfilled. First, a real desire to recruit Germans as Canadian settlers was needed; Canadian recruiters had to extend their recruitment vision beyond the British Isles. Second, and less difficult, was the creation of a new image for Canada. Such an image had already begun to emerge in

the decades after 1850, and it appeared in Germany almost from its inception. Because Canada lacked the advantages of a Cooper-style literary celebration, printed sources disseminating the new image consisted almost exclusively of newspaper accounts and brochures published by agents of Canada to promote emigration. The majority of these reports trumpeted the virtues of Canada. What these virtues were and how they were presented to German audiences remained, as shall be shown, largely consistent throughout the period described in this book.

In general, the new vision of Canada was based on two often contradictory sets of assumptions. On the one hand, apologists repeatedly presented Canada in romantic fashion as a uniquely unspoiled and natural land, wild and beautiful, mysterious and spiritual; on the other, it was described as a progressive, dynamic, and, most of all, civilized society. This dual presentation accorded with the ambivalence regarding tradition and change so apparent in the mid-nineteenth-century Western world, including Germany. The romantic and wild version of Canada thus could appeal to the allegedly spiritual and nonmaterialistic German who rejected the crassness and shallowness of the modern age in favour of the unspoiled and natural, while the dynamic, civilized rendition supposedly attracted Germans who embraced the progress and material advances associated with modernization. For the Faust types who were torn between the spiritual and material, Canada could be doubly fascinating.

In nearly every romantic description of Canada that appeared in Germany from the period before the Hudson's Bay lands were added to the dominion, the country appeared as a huge, sparsely settled land dominated by primeval forests (*Urwald*). Europeans were present, but their settlements had barely scratched the surface of the vast uncharted land. At this time, the broader concept of Canada included not only Upper and Lower Canada (later Ontario and Quebec) but also the eastern provinces New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island. The great North West, stretching from Ontario to the colony of British Columbia, was only beginning to be treated as part of the Canadian whole. The allusions to Canada appearing in mid-nineteenth-century Germany referred primarily to Lower and Upper Canada, which still possessed extensive tracts of virgin lands. These undeveloped areas, and especially the wild, unsettled areas of Ontario, appealed strongly to the German romantic's fascination with pure nature, and their descriptions in the German press afford the most common and complete presentations of the Canadian romantic ideal.

In their undisturbed and natural state, the virgin tracts of northern and western Ontario, it was claimed, contained an overabundance of natural resources. For example, in 1852 the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* (German Emigrants Newspaper), which appeared in Bremen, touted the province's

mineral wealth as including lead, iron, silver, gold, tin, and copper “in huge quantities.”⁶⁰ The same article reported that in similar fashion the seemingly endless forests of oak, maple, birch, elm, ash, hickory, butternut, cherry, poplar, cypress, hazelnut, sycamore, white pine, spruce, chestnut, and black walnut trees formed storehouses of valuable timber. Furthermore, these woods teemed with an extensive list of wild animals, some suitable for food, others valuable for their fur. Besides the edible deer, moose, and rabbits, there were innumerable ducks and geese for table fare. The passenger pigeons were so abundant that when migrating south in the fall they “filled the sky like clouds.” The forests also contained such exotic furbearers as wolverines, foxes, martens, minks, weasels, beavers, and muskrats. Wolves and bears were also present, but “not to be feared” because they kept to themselves in the undeveloped areas of the country. In addition, Ontario’s untracked north and west possessed extensive rivers and countless lakes filled with prize trout, pike, bass, and salmon.

Distinct from European custom, this abundant wild game was not the preserve of a special, privileged class. Accounts of life in the Canadian wilds nearly always pointed out the spectacular hunting and fishing opportunities available to all Canadian residents. For example, a letter from a German settler in northern Ontario that appeared in May 1871 in the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* contained the following report: “If he is fond of hunting, the landowner in his free time can stock in a good supply of meat for the winter. The woods are full of deer and smaller game which in some cases have valuable pelts. Feathered game, such as spruce grouse, are present in some areas in unbelievable numbers.”⁶¹ Thus, for the immigrant in Canada, hunting and fishing were both a right and a privilege, bringing the resident of Canada’s wilds into direct and intimate contact with elemental nature. To succeed at living off the land by hunting or fishing, one had not only to live in the midst of the animals being pursued; one had also to know their secrets in the same way the Native Americans did. Hunting in Canada might turn one into another Natty Bumppo, Cooper’s natural man in tune with the primeval forest and its creatures. In so promising, Canada offered the romantic imagination an experience every bit as alluring as the American one.

While the popular press and recruitment brochures depicted nature in Canada as untamed and uncharted, another more benign version also appeared. In the benign account, Canada’s climate was neither as harsh nor as forbidding as so often claimed. Canada’s apologists repeatedly insisted that the country’s climate and particularly its winters were not unbearably cold. Both Upper and Lower Canada were often described as having milder winter months than many of the bordering American states. An article appearing in December 1854 in the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* asserted, “The

climate in Canada is milder than that of New York, Illinois, Ohio and Wisconsin."⁶² Admittedly the Canadian winters brought ice and snow, but these represented blessings, not burdens. Canadians used the snow to their advantage, for "snow accompanied by hard frost turns the country's roads into the most beautiful thoroughfares" and upon these enchanting streets horse-drawn sleighs travel with ease. Even when some concessions were made to the serious cold of Canada's winters, its negative effects were de-emphasized. A pamphlet from 1858 designed to inform potential immigrants about Canada admitted that "the north wind is the coldest wind of winter" but insisted that this wind was "not rough but gentle."⁶³ Even when the winters appeared in print accurately as both long and bitterly cold, they were still defended as more beneficent than those of either America or Europe. "The [Canadian] winter" the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* reported in 1865, "may be harsh and severe, but it offers its special advantages such as the absence of fog and dampness which in milder climates are detrimental to health."⁶⁴

The supposed advantages of Canada's unspoiled natural environment and salubrious climate were continually emphasized. The bracing Canadian weather, apologists argued, contributed to the absence of disease, making Canada a healthier place than either the United States or Europe. Another 1858 pamphlet designed to lure Germans into emigrating summed up the Canadian advantage as follows: "On the whole, Canada's climate is very beneficial to both humans and plants. As a result, those living in Canada have a thoroughly healthy appearance. Sickesses common in other countries are absent in Canada. Malaria, for example, so common in the United States is seldom found in Canada. Therefore, the mortality rate in Canada is lower than in any other country."⁶⁵ During a period when many Europeans suffered not only from malnutrition but also from a multitude of maladies including cholera, typhus, and tuberculosis, the emphasis on Canada's favourable mortality rate in immigration recruitment literature made sense. An article in the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* in January 1862 purported to show just how superior the Canadian environment really was with a list of the mortality rates for ten European countries and Canada. Russia, with 1 in every 26 persons dying per year, appeared at the top of the list; at the very bottom came Canada, with a mortality rate of 1 for every 102 persons. Incidentally, Prussia and Austria were next in line after Russia, with rates of 1 per 30 and 35, respectively.⁶⁶ Lower mortality rates meant that people were living longer, and, according to the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung*, Canada proved the point. Drawing its figures from the 1851 Canadian census, the paper added up the number of people then living in Canada older than 80 years. The results tabulated as follows: 73 Canadians were 100 or more years old, 208 had lived between 90 and 100 years, and 2,664 fell into

the 80-to-90-year-old group. "No country on earth with a population of only 2 million," the article concluded, "can boast a similar number of persons so old. A land in which so many reach such an age must have a climate highly conducive to good health. Whoever wants to live a long time should emigrate to Canada."⁶⁷

Not surprisingly, a climate fostering longevity would also create favourable conditions for successful agriculture. Most brochures and articles that sought to win converts for Canada depicted the country as essentially pastoral. "Agriculture in Canada," a Canadian apologist wrote in the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung*, "is far more a livelihood issue than in the United States. Since we possess neither extensive nor large-scale industry ... our independence from foreign control, the increase in our general well-being, and the existence of our commerce depends essentially on the development and products of our land."⁶⁸ Between 1850 and 1870, Canadian agriculture produced grains, meat and dairy products, fruits, and vegetables. Virtually every report sent back to Germany by consuls or other observers described the Canadian agricultural scene as flourishing. These reports showed steady increases in the amount of land under cultivation and the volume of agricultural products produced. Importantly, farmers working their own land produced the agricultural products so necessary for the country's existence. The romantic ideal of the simple, self-reliant, self-respecting peasant landowner was thus being widely realized in Canada.

Moreover, these independent Canadian farmers wrested more than a meagre living from the soil. Toiling happily on their own land, they turned the wilderness into enchanting little Arcadias. An 1865 report in the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* nicely described what happened after a settler had taken possession of the land: "In the course of a few years an unbelievable transformation takes place. The previous wilderness is transformed into fertile fields. One after another, the tree stumps are uprooted and removed and the plow given free reign. The [primitive] blockhouse is replaced by a more elegant one of stone or wood. A garden is put in which provides vegetables for the family table. An orchard is planted: apples, pears, plums, cherries, and in some areas, splendid peaches are grown. Nowhere in the world do apples reach such impressive size, such beautiful coloration, such wonderful taste as in Canada."⁶⁹ The humble Canadian farm held out the promise of paradise; under the right management it could become a veritable Garden of Eden in the North American wilderness.

This flattering transformation incorporates the before and after theme used extensively by American propagandists. A Wisconsin solicitation brochure from 1881 provides an example of this technique. In it, two houses are depicted on one page. The "old farmhouse" is a simple log cabin in the forest with the family members busy at humble tasks: the father chops down a tree, while the mother stands over a cooking fire in the clearing before the

house. The page's lower portion presents the "new farmhouse," an elaborate two-storey home with a second-floor balcony, arched windows and doors in both levels, a pillared porch extending off the building's right side, and appropriately elaborate outbuildings behind the main house. No one is working about the house. Rather, a carriage with a driver is drawn up before the front door as if waiting for the master's appearance.⁷⁰ The lesson here is not subtle: If you migrate to Wisconsin, you can expect to progress from crude to finished, to rise from bare sufficiency to real wealth and comfort.

The Garden of Eden in Canada was not realized without significant homesteader effort, however. Accounts describing the process of creating a farm, particularly house building and clearing the land, appeared frequently in the popular press. Clearing the land, the most difficult single task confronting the immigrant-farmer, was often depicted in detail. Interested readers and would-be immigrants learned not only about felling trees (dangerous and difficult work) but also about how to remove the logs and stumps, how to stack the felled trees and brush in long rows, and then how to burn this mass of discarded wood. Finally, the reader received instruction on the retrieval of potash from the bonfire's remains.⁷¹

The portrayals of land clearing showcase a different version of nature from the benevolent, romantic picture described above. In this interpretation, as in the distant Germanic past, a hostile, even threatening, nature confronts humanity. To survive, settlers must strive against nature and force it to do their bidding. The struggle could become heroic. "To be sure," editorialized the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* in August 1865, "cutting down the forest and clearing the land is hard and often very frustrating work. Nevertheless, because the [settler's] stake in the cutting and clearing is so substantial and the satisfaction derived from it so great, the work unavoidably becomes a kind of labour of love. In a sense then, the axe is swung like a conquering sword. For the settler, mastering the forest is like vanquishing an enemy upon whose defeat the settler's future livelihood and well-being depends."⁷² In the aftermath of this battle between settler and primeval forest, civilization could and did enter the picture. Indeed, by 1850, apologists for Canada increasingly emphasized the progress Canada had made in advancing this civilizing process. Thus, the second facet of Canada's image, the civilized one, made its appearance in Germany.

In the period 1850-70 Canada was advertised as a civilized land in a variety of ways. To begin with, it appeared as a progressive country with a huge, almost limitless potential for economic development. To foster the development of both the country and its citizens, Canada fortunately possessed a responsible, responsive, and above all free political system. Although excluding women, this government closely protected the rights of its free males, making citizenship available to any honest man. Good citizenship, it was assumed, followed from informed citizens, so Canada also boasted a

comprehensive and enlightened educational system. Thus, at midcentury Canada enjoyed a free, peaceful, and orderly existence in comparison with the United States. Although the United States also offered free land and political participation, these did not come without risks. Aggressive, expansionist America, with its tradition of war (the 1840s had seen the war against Mexico and continued expropriation of Native lands) and its burden of Southern slavery, contrasted sharply with Canada's less belligerent, less frenetic ways. Canada apologists never tired of pointing this out to their German audience.

Although promotional literature usually described Canada as a tradition-bound agrarian paradise, other accounts available in Germany showed its economic system as forward moving. If the country did not equal Great Britain, the United States, or even Germany in industrial activity, it never appeared economically comatose. The introduction of the railroad showed life; so did the frantic building of roads into the bush and the new patent activity apparent in midcentury Canada. This latter development disproved the "hewer of wood and drawer of water" Canadian stereotype by showing, as one enthusiast put it, that "a remarkably acute sense for mechanical matters and a profound understanding of related sciences" existed in Canada.⁷³ The future development of Canada's economy therefore seemed promising. Among other things, the abundance of fast-running rivers assured an available power source for the country's coming factories.⁷⁴ By midcentury, Canadian time had developed that new speeded-up dimension so often associated with modern economic life. "As recently as 14 years ago," an observer noted in 1867, "it took the mail service 10½ days to carry a letter from Quebec to Detroit. Now it can be done in 30 hours."⁷⁵

Nevertheless, apologists not only admitted outright that Canada's industry was more traditional than modern, they even celebrated this traditionalism. Pre-Confederation lists of employment opportunities for Germans in Canada nearly always included positions available in the artisan trades. An 1861 brochure from a Canadian agent in Berlin listed some 15,000 job openings in Upper Canada. Although about three-quarters of these solicited either farmers or domestic servants, some 1,500 alleged openings called for skilled craftsmen such as carpenters, masons, tailors, goldsmiths, and shoemakers.⁷⁶ In the same vein, another agent reporting from Quebec in 1867 insisted that "those who enjoy the best chances for employment in Canada are farmers, blacksmiths, masons, locksmiths, tailors, day labourers and housemaids."⁷⁷ There were also opportunities in proto-industries such as linen production. Advancements in Canadian flax growing and the linen cloth industry were frequently pointed out and exaggerated claims were not uncommon. An anonymous correspondent to the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* in 1853, for example, claimed linen manufacturing had advanced

so far in Canada that “flax taken green from the field in the morning could be turned into sturdy cloth by evening of the same day.”⁷⁸

This progressively conservative and civilized Canadian economy could only have developed, so propagandists argued, in a supportive political environment. Both small independent farmers and artisans fit easily into Canada’s political order, which not only protected individual rights but also relied on citizen participation to make the system function. Thus, the promotional commentaries on Canada’s government appearing in Germany during the period 1850-70 emphasized two major points. First, individual Canadians enjoyed extensive personal freedom. They lived, as one commentator put it, “free as a fish in water.”⁷⁹ Although Canada in 1850 remained tethered to England’s monarchy, Canadians enjoyed the same rights and privileges as free Englishmen: “Despite the fact that Canada is a royal province,” a German immigrant wrote home in 1853, “it nevertheless enjoys a freedom and independence that does not exist in continental Europe. As England, the mother country of this colony, possesses the freest institutions in Europe, so Canada enjoys the same rights and freedoms. Furthermore, between the independence of the United States and Canada there is no essential difference. For we [Canadians] have the same personal freedom, the same independent law making power, the same protections afforded by the law, and the same free press.”⁸⁰

Second, the political system that provided such personal freedom represented its citizens in model fashion. The explanation for this was simple: Canadians enjoyed self-government because they could vote. An 1860 brochure broadcasting Canada’s merits explained its broad suffrage: “The right to vote is nearly general. Every man who pays 30 dollars property tax in the cities or who pays 20 dollars tax in the country is permitted to vote.” In addition, the pamphlet continued, “All public offices and seats in the legislature are open to any candidate who has the trust of his fellow citizens, owns property, and is a British subject.”⁸¹ Immigrants acquired citizenship with all its privileges through naturalization, available to them after a three-year waiting period. Impressive examples of self-government existed throughout the Canadian political system. At the highest level, citizens elected representatives to a legislative council and house of assembly, both modelled on the British parliamentary division between House of Commons and House of Lords. For the average farmer or immigrant, even more obvious expressions of Canada’s celebrated self-government appeared at the county and municipal levels, in the citizen’s control of taxes. “The municipal taxes,” the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* proclaimed in June 1857, “are raised from a tax on all [real] property in the township or county” and “must be expended for the general welfare.” Furthermore, “no special tax could be levied without the prior approval of the municipality’s residents.”⁸²

The very substantial public monies devoted to schools proved convincingly that Canadians supported their revenue-raising system.

Virtually all accounts arguing the advantages of Germans immigrating to Canada focused attention on its impressive system of public education. Supported, as seen, by public monies, this system included grammar schools in each township and county high schools. As settled areas expanded, so did the school system. Between 1842 and 1855, the German press reported, the number of grammar schools in Upper Canada increased from 1,721 to 3,325.⁸³ To provide instructors for these schools, the provincial government created a normal school, “a highly effective and necessary institute for educating teachers which graduates each year 100 to 150 young men and women who are systematically trained ... so that in Upper Canada a grammar school system has been established that promises great things.”⁸⁴ To accommodate teachers and students, significant tracts of land were set aside in the townships for schools. The *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* reported in 1853 that the provincial and local governments in Upper Canada “have made extraordinary outlays for the support of education ... Nearly 500,000 acres have been reserved for educational institutions.”⁸⁵

Finally, to emphasize Canada’s civilized condition, apologists used the United States as a foil, particularly in the 1860s when civil war and chaos reigned there. The theme of slavery repeatedly appeared in these moral comparisons. Even before the outbreak of the War between the States, the existence of slavery in America was condemned as hypocritically inconsistent with American claims of being a free society. In contrast, Canada not only had no legalized slavery but thousands of escaped slaves living there as free Canadian citizens. “Coloured people,” the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* pointed out in 1853, “in the British-American provinces enjoy the same rights as whites, and not merely on paper but in fact. For example, one can see mulattoes and Negroes sitting next to their fellow white citizens on juries rendering judgment on whites. A citizen of the United States would find such a proceeding tainted. He would consider a trial in which whites were judged by Negroes or descendants of Negroes not only unusual but hateful.”⁸⁶

Canadian recruiters and agents saw the American Civil War as a splendid opportunity to promote Canadian immigration at the expense of the United States. To Germans who themselves had experienced war and revolution, Canadian apologists now offered a peaceful alternative: “During this time of civil war in America, Canada offers the immigrant a homeland where he will enjoy full freedom to move about and to pursue his livelihood undisturbed.”⁸⁷ Free expression also existed in Canada to a greater degree than in war-torn America. “The violent passions sweeping both the southern and northern United States and the summary proceedings through which opinions are controlled,” the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* editorialized in May 1861, “stand in dramatic contrast to the freedom of discussion to which

the immigrant is accustomed in Canada. Indeed, there are numerous examples of men who, harbouring the wrong ideas, have settled in the United States and been either lynched or subjected to other abuses because they dared to exercise a right guaranteed in Canada, namely the right to free speech." The article pointed out that the violent limitations on free speech extended to the press as well: "In both the North and South the mob has established itself as censor"; the oppression "is no worse in New Orleans than in New York, in Baltimore than in Buffalo."⁸⁸

In Canada the violence of intolerant opinion, the terrorist acts of brutal men, and the tyranny of a government that taxed for war and drafted young innocents for battle were mercifully absent. Because civilized Canada exhibited peace, not war, freedom, not slavery, her "social relations, morals, and customs offered more to the European immigrant than did the Yankees." And because the Civil War's moral corruption was likely to continue even after the guns fell silent and the physical destruction stopped, Canada's advantage over the United States as a place for immigrants would remain into the future. In July 1862, the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* described the American fall from grace that could only advantage the British portion of North America: "Even if this unholy war ends, its effects will not. The magical spell which once surrounded the world-renowned Union has forever been broken." Canada's superiority, the paper claimed, was so "obvious no elaboration is necessary."⁸⁹ Despite the truth in much of this, the number of emigrants heading for Canada during the Civil War did not increase dramatically. Although immigration to the United States fell off, Canada's attracting power had not increased enough to exploit the American decline.⁹⁰

In sum, the image created for Canada in the period 1850-70, although modelled in many ways on that of the United States, remained distinct. Despite the fact that both countries touted their free, productive land and their civilized institutions and customs, major differences existed. To the hope for greater wealth and personal freedom, to the promise of low taxes and free public education, the American image added an element absent in the Canadian version, namely, that of adventure or even danger. The America of frontier rough-and-tumble, duels over honour, Indian wars, and mining town prostitutes allegedly did not exist in Britain's North American colony. On the contrary, Canada's promotional materials, composed almost entirely by paid emigration propagandists, were meant to appeal to peaceful, hard-working, sober, responsible types only. The savage land, "Wild West" image bandied about by American apologists and German fiction writers never materialized for Canada. Presumably such a violent, disordered model would not have properly reflected British institutions, customs, or law.

Although printed promotional materials described Canada as a superior choice for would-be immigrants, just how much the propaganda influenced

migration remains difficult to measure. The image just described mirrored the ideals of the sturdy, respectable bourgeoisie, reflecting middle-class values prevalent at midcentury in England, Canada, and Germany. Most German emigrants to Canada in the period 1850-70 did not belong to Germany's *Bildungsbürgertum*, that is, the wealthy, educated upper middle class, but rather were part of the lower middle class or petty bourgeoisie, being former landowning peasants, agricultural labourers, small craftsmen, and the like. Yet many of these people shared the middle-class values being promoted in the Canada image. Presumably the promise of free land would have influenced them, as Monckmeier recognized: "The most powerful attraction in the new world is the surplus of land which offers the possibility of easy acquisition of one's own place ... The wish to possess one's own land has been the goal of Germany's petty bourgeoisie, skilled craftsmen, and farmers who make up the majority of those who emigrate."⁹¹ How much these same groups were moved by free political institutions, comprehensive education, or social tranquility is more difficult to know. Finally, the romantic image of untamed, wild, spiritual Canadian nature may have appealed to a member of the *Bildungsbürgertum* who read Novalis or Goethe on nature, or perhaps James Fenimore Cooper on North America, but most likely not to a ruined freeholding peasant or marginal artisan. The issue of promotional effectiveness is tied not only to socioeconomic class preferences and cultural proclivities but also to image dissemination. This in turn relates directly to the role played by agents and agencies in facilitating immigration.

Agents and Agencies to Assist Migration

For migration historians, who have long recognized the push-pull factors affecting movement, the role played by immigration agents and agencies as a possible third force between the push-pull forces remains problematic. Although sources for accurate assessment of agent work are rare, a good deal is known about what nineteenth-century agents and agencies did to foster immigration. Before 1850, immigrant recruitment had normally been unsystematic, often haphazard. Burgeoning immigrant numbers and the increasingly apparent profits to be made by those in German lands and ports facilitating emigration changed this. The rapid expansion and development of official agencies, agents, and sales staffs promoting migration occurred in conjunction with the changeover from sailing ships to steam power. In the words of the Danish migration historian Kristian Hvidt, "The introduction of regular traffic routes between Europe and the United States and the consolidation of Atlantic shipping in large, well-financed steamship companies in England and Germany necessitated a thoroughly organized, permanent sales organization."⁹² In North America the new sales organizations and their agents appeared first in the United States; Canada experienced the change more slowly and tentatively.

During the 1850s the use of government agents to promote German immigration to Canada was strictly limited. Several factors accounted for this. The absence of a coherent, general migration policy for the provinces of British North America contributed. In Britain the prevailing liberal ideology decreed that no explicit governmental involvement in designing or implementing an active migration policy for British North America would be forthcoming. Further, the political uncertainty in Upper and Lower Canada, which made immigration a potentially divisive issue, did not favour active governmental promotion. The economic downturn in the middle of the decade also played a role by reducing the numbers of migrants coming to Canada and thus the need for government personnel to serve them. Despite these unfavourable factors, a small number of German immigrants continued to seek asylum in Canada. To assist these newcomers, some service-rendering agents had to exist, as limited as their numbers might be. In general, agents employed by the Canadian government could be divided into two main groups: domestic and foreign. The former were basically appointees stationed in Canada to assist immigrants who had just arrived; the representatives positioned outside Canada in the British Isles or continental Europe were charged with both recruiting and then assisting their charges in the migration process. Despite the paucity of foreign agents, enough of their domestic counterparts were in place in British North America at mid-century to provide German immigrants with settlement assistance.

Stationed at different locations in Canada, domestic agents provided a large variety of services. Agents at the disembarkation ports informed the new arrivals on such matters as train schedules and ticket prices, temporary housing, short-term employment, and even exchange rates for currency brought from Germany. In addition, most areas being opened up for settlement had domestic agents assigned to assist immigrants in locating and beginning a homestead.⁹³ Ontario agents were listed by name for those areas offering free land. For example, the German emigrant press announced in July 1856 that "the provincial government has recently opened up three main roads ... and has surveyed the land through which these roads traverse or which lies near them and marked off lots for settlement. Furthermore, it has published information on the roads in the several regions and the agents the government has appointed to administer them for settlement. The roads are known as the Ottawa and Opeongo Road, the Addington Road, and the Hastings Road." For the Ottawa Road the agent "who transfers land is Mr. T.P. French, who lives in Mount St. Patrick." The agent for the Addington Road was a "Mr. C. Perry, who lives in the village of Flints Mills." For the Hastings Road, settlers were to contact "Mr. M.P. Hayes, residing in Hastings Village about 28 miles north of the town of Belleville." These agents, the article concluded, would be able "to provide whomsoever wants to settle all the information necessary" to secure a free homestead.⁹⁴ In short, Canada's

domestic agents were expected to look after the newcomers upon their arrival in Canada, to ensure safe travel to their intended place of settlement, and to provide the new immigrants with advice and assistance in establishing their homesteads.

In the 1850s William Sinn was Canada's most prominent domestic agent serving German immigrants and the one best known in Germany. A native Prussian, Sinn received an appointment in 1853 as agent in Quebec to assist A.C. Buchanan, long-time head of the Royal Emigration Department's branch there. Located on Quebec's Gibb's Wharf, Sinn's office invited new arrivals to stop in. As described in an 1853 flyer circulated in Germany, agent Sinn was "to dedicate his entire activity to the well-being of his fellow landspeople [Germans] and to provide them with all necessary information on the cheapest and best opportunities for travel inland, real estate availability, and the prospects for securing such property." In cases of complaints about abuse of immigrants during the passage over, he was "to see that steps be taken to guarantee that those guilty of such abuses be held responsible."⁹⁵ An announcement that appeared in the German migration press in August 1853 also emphasized Sinn's caretaker, watchdog role. Buchanan, the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* announced, had appointed the German-speaking Sinn to thwart con artists and so-called runners who over the past few years "had swindled many German families out of their hard-earned money."⁹⁶ Sinn, an 1860 brochure assured intended Canadian immigrants, would be easily recognizable because "he had only one eye."⁹⁷

Correspondence Sinn maintained with the Württemberg Ministry of the Interior in the mid-1850s reveals his actual activities in serving German immigrants. On occasion he cashed the money drafts which the emigrants brought with them from Württemberg. He also made special efforts to assist immigrants in reaching their intended places of settlement as expeditiously as possible. His letters to the Württemberg ministry describe how he successfully secured reduced fares or free train tickets for some. Indeed, Sinn's close relationship with the Grand Trunk Railway contributed to the belief in Quebec that he served as an agent for the railroad as well as the emigration department. In addition, Sinn assisted many newcomers to find jobs on farms or as servants. "To avoid the ordeals of Liverpool," Gerhard Bassler writes, "Sinn recommended use of the equally cheap Hamburg shipping line Knorr & Holtermann about whose past six years of direct services to Quebec not a single complaint had been registered." Sinn's close working relationship with the Württemberg government "led to his being considered for the position of that state's consul in Canada."⁹⁸ A. Schumacher, the German consul in Baltimore, who visited Quebec while on vacation in the fall of 1854, also attested to the effectiveness of Sinn's activities. From his interview with Sinn, Schumacher concluded that the Canadian authorities did more to assist German immigrants than their counterparts in the United States.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, in this period immigrant agents often received little respect from the public. For example, Norman Macdonald found hostile sentiment in Great Britain, where Canadian immigrant agents were commonly thought of as “noisy, boasting, bragging, blustering ... story tellers” who lied about Canada “beautifully and plausibly.”¹⁰⁰ Similarly, the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* in Rudolstadt published a series of reports listing immigrant dissatisfactions with Sinn’s work. These included accusations of selling railway tickets at inflated prices and using his job as Buchanan’s assistant to advance his career.¹⁰¹

In the end, the accusations against Sinn were refuted in an article in the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung*. Buchanan, the respected head of the immigration office in Quebec, vouched for Sinn, insisting that he was neither a “phoney nor hypocrite” guilty of exploiting immigrants. Furthermore, the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* reported that Sinn had also received written approval “complete with official seals from the consuls for the Hansa cities, Belgium, and Prussia.”¹⁰² This appeared to be sufficient proof of his respectability. The Bremen paper’s conclusion seems borne out by the fact that Sinn remained in office. Five years later in a promotional pamphlet, Buchanan included testimonials from Prussian immigrants extolling Sinn’s contribution to their successful settlement in Upper Canada.¹⁰³ In 1868, the year of Buchanan’s death, William Sinn remained the interpreter and record keeper for German immigrants arriving in Quebec.¹⁰⁴ The controversies that characterized Sinn’s term in office reflected not only his personal credibility problems but the uncertain and undefined state of Canadian immigration policy and practice. The shifting parameters of Sinn’s job frequently created conflicts of interest as he sought to fulfill roles as both private businessman and paid civil servant.

Gradually, in the late 1850s modest support developed for the belief that the recruitment of immigrants in Europe needed a fresh approach. The previous system of sending private persons as temporary missionaries to win converts for Canada or of relying on ship captains or shipping firms in Germany or England to solicit emigrants on an ad hoc basis seemed inadequate. Immigration had become pressing because increasing numbers of Canadians, both English and French speakers, had moved south to the United States. Responding to this hemorrhaging population, the legislative assembly of the Province of Canada in 1857 appointed a series of committees to investigate and find a solution to the population drain. According to Paul Gates, “The first important step in what was to develop into a great campaign to secure immigrants for Canada was taken in the latter part of 1859 when A.B. Hawke ... was sent to England to begin work there.” He was specifically charged “to open an office at Liverpool where persons planning to emigrate might obtain information and ... to advertise in such papers as *The Times*, *The Liverpool Times*, *Bell’s Weekly Messenger*, and *The*

Field, calling attention to his office and the information and literature available there ... and to circularize the rural papers by sending them copies of the pamphlets and other advertising literature with which he was provided."¹⁰⁵ Thus, the Canadian government began sending permanent agents to Europe to establish offices for recruiting future settlers and assisting them in their journeys to Canada. Overwhelmingly, the government based its agents in the United Kingdom: at the beginning of the 1860s Reverend Henry Hope was sent to London, John A. Donaldson to Londonderry, and Alexander McLachlan to Scotland. A.C. Buchanan was transferred in 1861 from Quebec to take over Hawke's work in Liverpool.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, in a significant departure from its earlier practices, the Canadian government appointed a German-speaking agent to reside in Germany, where he could personally direct would-be immigrants to Canada.

The first representative of this policy, the Prussian native and naturalized Canadian William Wagner, received his appointment to head a newly established bureau in Berlin on 30 January 1860. Born in 1820 in Grabow (Posen), Wagner had studied geography and surveying in Breslau, Posen, and Berlin before emigrating to Canada in 1850. A government land surveyor in Upper Canada, he had also gained some experience as an independent agent. For example, in June 1859 he "visited Prussia and North Germany to recruit immigrants for settlement in Canada." On that tour, he provided information about Canada on land acquisition, climate, and the legal system. Thus his background and experience seemed especially appropriate for this German appointment. As an emigrant himself, he knew from personal experience the complexities and difficulties in both leaving Germany and shipping to Canada. Having resided in Canada for nine years before accepting the Berlin post, he was a credible authority for those interested in moving to Canada. Finally, he possessed useful journalistic skills, knowing how to write persuasively in the German language. Examples of his journalism appeared at the outset of his Berlin appointment: in 1860 he published the pamphlets *Über die unentgeltliche Hergabe von Land in Canada* (On the Acquisition of Free Land in Canada) and *Über den Verkauf von Regierungs-Landereien in Canada* (On the Purchasing of Government Lands in Canada), and in 1861, *Anleitung für Diejenigen welche sich am Ottawa Flusse Niederlassen Wollen* (Guide for Those Seeking to Settle on the Ottawa River).¹⁰⁷ At the time of his Berlin appointment, Wagner was instructed by Ottawa "to encourage small farmers and agricultural laborers, but not mechanics, to migrate to Canada."¹⁰⁸

As publicist, salesperson, and recruiter, Wagner travelled throughout Prussia and northern Germany. In February 1861 he reported home that he had secured permission from the commissioners of the Berlin-Hamburg Railway "to display a map of Canada at stations along the line." In 1862 Wagner claimed that he had "advertised in papers with a joint circulation

of 400,000 copies, distributed 3,500 pamphlets, displayed 222 maps of Canada in railway stations, pubs, etc." As well, he lectured in Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Breslau, Hirschberg (Silesia), and Erfurt. Between January and March of 1862, he informed his superiors that he had "answered 178 letters of inquiry from prospective emigrants."¹⁰⁹ How successful his activity was in garnering actual immigrants for Canada cannot be known, but it was insufficient for the legislative committee that investigated his work in 1862 and found the returns for the \$6,000 invested in his efforts unsatisfactory.¹¹⁰ Although in 1866 the Montreal German Society pushed Wagner's candidacy for the recently vacated immigration agent position in Quebec, by then his star had set.¹¹¹

Although Wagner represented the new salaried governmental functionary charged with recruiting and looking after immigrants, the old private practitioners still dominated the field. Private transportation firms continued their efforts to solicit paying customers. For example, the Allan Shipping Line stationed a permanent man in Liverpool who advertised his services for would-be German emigrants in the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung*.¹¹² Canada's Grand Trunk Railway also had representatives in Liverpool selling tickets that would carry immigrants from Liverpool to Quebec and beyond to the places of intended settlement. In 1869 the railway sent agents to Hamburg to sell such tickets there. (The Hamburg city government refused the request to allow these sales, claiming the impossibility of guaranteeing the validity of such tickets once the immigrant reached Canada.)¹¹³ Advertising land in eastern Ontario for fifty cents an acre in the German press, the Canadian Land and Emigration Company in 1866 dispatched its agent Mr. Bechel to Germany to travel through Hanover, Hesse-Kassel, Brunswick, and part of Prussia soliciting emigrant purchasers.¹¹⁴ This unsystematic and often chaotic mixture of private persons and public officials competing with one another in selling tickets, soliciting emigrants, and providing information on how to emigrate persisted throughout the decade. Although the several types of agents frequently worked at cross purposes, they generally used the same sales techniques.

To complement the work of the emigration agents but also to protect against unscrupulous agents, agencies designed to facilitate and to reduce the hazards of immigration multiplied in Europe as the emigration movement mushroomed. Secular and religious emigration assistance organizations appeared in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Scandinavia. For example, in England during the last half of the nineteenth century over sixty such agencies worked to promote and justify emigration to Britain's numerous colonies.¹¹⁵ The National Emigration Aid Society, formed in 1867, which provided information covering the whole process of migration from departure to settlement, was representative. In Germany, the first such agency, the Giessener Auswanderungsgesellschaft (Giessen Emigration Society), had been founded

in 1833.¹¹⁶ Those that followed, both public and private, varied considerably, with some functioning for profit, some for altruistic or nationalist motives. During the 1840s in particular their numbers increased dramatically. Peter Marschalck lists twenty-seven German immigration agencies active in the period 1833-50, of which twenty were established in the 1840s.¹¹⁷

The most important of these was the National Verein für Deutsche Auswanderung und Ansiedlung (National Society for German Emigration and Settlement). The program of the National Verein appeared first in the weekly publication *Der Deutsche Auswanderer* (The German Emigrant) in December 1847. This impressively detailed document articulated many of the themes and goals characterizing emigration assistance agencies throughout the period 1850-1939. For example, the society's program considered poverty and the role of the poor in emigration; it discussed the importance of German ports and shipping companies transporting emigrants; it analyzed emigrant categories, from the wealthy seeking new business opportunities to the paupers desiring only to exchange their hopeless condition in Germany for a new chance abroad; it reflected on the possibility and desirability of establishing closed colonies of Germans overseas; it listed the kinds of printed materials, such as itineraries, maps, and money exchange rate tables, emigrants should be provided with before departing from Germany; it described what earlier German immigrants already established in the United States could do to assist newly arriving countrymen; it made suggestions for monitoring conditions aboard emigrant ships in German ports; and it proposed the establishment of a dozen branch offices of the National Verein throughout Germany.

Several such branch offices did materialize, in Hesse, Württemberg, Baden, Kurhessen, and Nassau. The National Verein branch office in Baden was representative. Founded in 1849, this agency was empowered by statute with several tasks: to establish a central office in Karlsruhe to oversee and coordinate emigration matters, to provide information for emigrants on traveling out of Germany and settlement overseas, to appoint agents at various locations along the routes used by emigrants, to monitor travel contracts, and to support emigrants without means by raising money to pay for their exodus from Germany. Closely allied with Baden's government (eight of the nine-member executive committee directing the agency were civil servants), the agency supported the policy of reducing the numbers of the duchy's paupers by using public monies to pay for their emigration. The agency's activities increased as the tide of immigration swelled to a peak in 1854. After that, its effectiveness decreased dramatically.¹¹⁸

During the same period a number of similar societies not closely affiliated with the National Verein appeared in Saxony, Silesia, Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, and Frankfurt, such as *Der Frankfurter Verein zum Schutze der Auswanderung* (The Frankfurt Society for the Protection of Emigration),

formed in 1850. With a membership fluctuating between 200 and 300 throughout the 1850s and 1860s, the association exhibited both material and philanthropic motives. The society's members, for the most part important political and economic figures in the city, wished to protect emigrants passing through Frankfurt from swindlers and others intent upon exploiting them. The city fathers strongly believed that if the emigrants fared well in Frankfurt, not only would the reputation of the city be upheld but the business community would also benefit. To this end, the city government passed protective regulations. Agents and others engaged in serving emigrants received close and ongoing police scrutiny. Moreover, solicitation of emigrants was prohibited on the Main River docks, in train stations, and even in public houses. Beyond ensuring a safe environment, the society saw its mission as providing information and advice. According to Hartmut Bickelmann, "The office [of the society] dispensed both written and verbal information on all questions pertaining to emigration, on the suitability of some lands for immigration, on the types of transportation available, and on travel and settlement conditions overseas. They often worked closely with the assistance bureaus in Bremen and Hamburg as well as with the German societies in the United States."¹¹⁹ The society's yearly reports indicate that in the early 1850s, its busiest period, the society advised over 2,000 emigrants a year.

Berlin, Germany's largest city in 1850, had its own emigration agency, *Der Berliner Verein zu Centralisation deutscher Auswanderung und Colonisation* (The Berlin Society for the Centralization of German Emigration and Colonization). Founded in 1849, this private association differed from most other emigration aid organizations and the *National Verein*. From its inception, the society's directors had close connections to Prussia's conservative elements. These wealthy merchants, bankers, high-up bureaucrats, and particularly large landowners were all strongly opposed to German labour and wealth leaving the country. Viewing German emigration critically, the *Berliner Verein* considered a major part of its mission to be dissuading would-be emigrants from leaving. If emigrants could not be convinced to stay home, then the society tried to steer them to a closed German colony that would maintain close economic and political ties to the fatherland. Specifically, it promoted settlement areas and colonies in Central and South America, such as Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast. The *Berliner Verein* disapproved of settlement in North America and especially the United States, because Germans who had emigrated there became too assimilated and thus lost to the fatherland. To convince future emigrants to avoid the United States, it circulated disparaging reports about American settlement opportunities; its publications frequently detailed how often disillusioned German immigrants had failed in their efforts to settle there. The *Berliner Verein* also assumed the traditional role of defending emigrants from unscrupulous agents and

swindlers by providing practical advice and assistance. During its five-year existence, the society allegedly advised over 15,000 souls. Although this service could be considered successful, the society's other objectives of dampening emigration desires and promoting German colonies remained unfulfilled.¹²⁰

In Canada, a network of immigrant assistance agencies developed only slowly. Founded in 1835, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft Montreal* (German Society of Montreal) was the earliest and most prominent of such organizations. Originally a social club, the society became involved with Canada's German immigrants in the late 1840s when their numbers increased so dramatically. These augmented numbers reflected not only the economic and social crises of those years but also the opening in 1847 of a direct route for sailing ships between Bremen and Quebec. With more and more German immigrants in the city, the society began to serve the neediest. For example, it gave indigents funds for further travel, covered medical bills, and provided educational support. In 1852 the society effectively petitioned the Canadian government to appoint Adolphus Schmidt, one of its members, "to serve under Buchanan as the first German subagent and interpreter for German immigrants in the port of Montreal."¹²¹ In the period 1850-70, the society increasingly assumed the task of representing and defending the interests of fellow Germans.

Propaganda to Induce Migration

Of the printed materials used to sell Canada in Germany, the two most common were articles in German newspapers and German-language information brochures. What appeared in the newspapers repeated what the brochures described, only in more detail. The first Canadian promotional brochures appeared in the mid-1850s. In 1854 William Hutton, secretary of the Bureau of Agriculture, produced a pamphlet entitled *Canada: Its Present Conditions, Prospects, and Resources, Fully Described for the Information of Intending Emigrants*, which circulated not only in England but also in translation in the German states.¹²² The Canadian brochures circulating in Germany during the period 1850-70 were typical of the genre for North America generally, providing similar information about the how, where, and when of migration and developing common themes dealing with present and future immigrant prospects. Whether created by the government or private firms, Canadian brochures imitated US efforts, for the Americans had developed the promotional pamphlet to a high degree. The following content analysis of representative brochures promoting Upper and Lower Canada includes references to brochures and pamphlets produced between 1853 and 1862.

From their title pages, most of the brochures left little doubt that they conveyed facts on Canada for immigrants. The brochures' authors always

insisted that the information provided constituted neither an apologia for Canada nor an attack on Germany. Rather, their object was simply to inform those who had already decided to leave. Beginning with the "hardest facts," the brochures usually started with a description of Canada's size. In 1850, for example, Upper and Lower Canada, together totalled "350,000 square miles ... more than a third greater than France and three times the size of Prussia." Within this huge land mass one found a varied and fascinating topography – vast forests, abundant rivers and lakes, and even mountains. The brochures nearly always described the climate as temperate, the population of several million as tiny compared to Europe's, the beauty of the landscape as astonishing, and the plants and animals as valuable and multifarious. The country's history was among these hard facts.¹²³ Founded by French explorers in the sixteenth century, it was first settled by their transplanted countrymen, and then by the English. The conflict between the French and English reached a resolution in 1761 with the English finally defeating the French. From then on, Upper and Lower Canada, which were united politically in 1840, had remained tied to Great Britain. Undeterred by revolution and sometimes invasion from the south, Canada had stubbornly retained its independence from the United States up to the present.

Besides giving such general information, the brochures usually described Canada's political and economic systems. The resulting picture of Canada's politics conformed closely to the promotional image described above: that is, Canada's free political system and generous citizenship provisions guaranteed broad individual participation in and close identification with the system. From such identification and participation followed its low taxes, religious tolerance, impressive educational program, and individual economic opportunity. This last feature became a constant theme in Canadian brochure literature. Like most American promotional brochures from the same period, the pamphlets pointedly described opportunities in Canada exceeding those available in Germany.¹²⁴ This emphasis testified to the recognition among brochure producers that the economic motive appealed most powerfully to would-be immigrants.

The brochure portrait of Canada's economy normally included natural resources, commerce, industry, transportation, and agriculture, and the last two logically received the most attention. Developments in the period 1850-70 in Canada's transportation system included extending the system of roads, building canals, expanding steamboat travel on the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, and introducing the railroad. Canadian promotional pamphlets frequently cited canals as artful engineering feats linking Canada's wonderful system of lakes and rivers. Announcements of new roads to open up undeveloped areas of the country for settlement also appeared in virtually all Canadian brochures. As well as showing growth and expansion of the

settled portion of the country, these announcements broadcast the location of new lands available for homesteading. For example, William Wagner's 1860 pamphlet listed, besides the Ottawa-Opeongo, Addington, and Hastings Roads, eight additional highways in Upper Canada being extended at that time.¹²⁵ To reach the newly created roads with speed and a minimum of discomfort, the brochures proudly pointed out, Canada's rapidly developing steamship and railway system lay at the immigrants' disposal.

In the extensive promotional literature produced by the several American states competing for German immigrants at this time, the railroads were also elaborately described and celebrated. As Ingrid Schöberl has pointed out, in US immigration propaganda the railroad was intended to represent "a measuring rod of civilization." Furthermore, the American state railroads "in their connections to other interstate lines and in their plans for expansion proved that the state was not cut off from the outside world."¹²⁶ Similarly, nearly all the brochures produced to solicit immigrants for British North America emphasized the significance of the railroad for Canada's present and future. William Wagner boasted to his German readers that Canada already possessed 1,876 miles of track, and thus "exceeded the mileage in Ireland or Scotland" and was "more than that in the three states New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland or in the two states North and South Carolina."¹²⁷ In 1853 Buchanan produced a three-page flyer that included tables for some three dozen railroad routes connecting centres in Upper and Lower Canada. These tables listed for each route the number of miles of completed track, the mileage under construction, and the distances approved for construction. He even put an asterisk before those routes "which either ran through or passed close to German settlements."¹²⁸

Canada's transportation infrastructure developed so rapidly after mid-century to facilitate the growth of the Canadian economy. As already noted, in the period 1850-70 agriculture and agricultural products constituted the most important part of that economy. The promotional brochures puffing Canada for potential German immigrants reflected this fact by devoting significant space to information about agriculture and the opportunities it afforded new settlers. Although Canadian agriculture in the two decades after 1850 included dairy farming and truck gardening, most Canadian farmers concentrated on growing wheat. "The chief product of agriculture," an anonymous pamphlet reported in 1858, "is wheat, and the enormous quantity of this valuable commodity exported as grain and flour proves how extensively it is cultivated."¹²⁹ In Wagner's brochure Canada's wheat received an even more enthusiastic review: "One should not forget that Canadian wheat grown near Toronto won first prize at the Paris exhibition." He further asserted that "the quality of Canadian wheat is so excellent that American millers buy it to mix with American wheat to improve the quality of their export flour."¹³⁰

In addition to providing such positive descriptions of Canada's farmland, the brochures indicated how and where an immigrant could secure free, readily available acreage for growing such superior crops. For example, a pamphlet entitled *Canada 1862: Zur Nachricht für Einwanderer* (Canada 1862: Information for Immigrants) described free land grants of up to 100 acres in Upper Canada along seven specific roads including the Addington, Ottawa and Opeongo, and Hastings Roads. As well as providing the names and addresses of the agents for those roads, it indicated what means of transportation to use to reach the free land. In addition, the brochure included individual, informative reports from the land agents providing details on local conditions and developments. For the Addington Road, the agent Ebenezer Perry of Tamworth described available free Crown land and partially cleared land for seventy cents an acre. He mentioned the rich sandy loam of the area and the many kinds of trees that grew locally, and he reported on the ethnic makeup of the immigrant population and how well they got along.¹³¹

Some pamphlets offered more information for homesteaders than just land prices and locations. The more comprehensive brochures sometimes described what expenses the settler would incur after he had taken up possession of his free farmstead. William Wagner's brochure, for example, projected the food needs for a family in Canada during the first year of homesteading, including eight barrels of flour, eighty bushels of potatoes, and thirty pounds of tea. Widening his scope, Wagner calculated other living expenses, such as seed amounts and costs for planting potatoes, wheat, and oats. Wagner also estimated necessary personal, household, and work articles, such as dishes, pots, and pans, clothes for the family, and farming tools. After all his listing and figuring, Wagner concluded that immigrants to Canada should bring at least 300 Prussian thalers. With any less cash, Wagner warned, they "would be unable to establish a viable home in Canada."¹³²

Although the average brochure may not have dispensed advice to the extent Wagner did, most pamphlets nevertheless provided suggestions on what to do after arrival in Canada. This included more than simply providing boat and train schedules and ticket prices. Brochure authors knew the vulnerability of naive immigrants upon their arrival in North America. As a result, the pamphlets offered solicitous advice on everything from what clothes to pack, what amount of cash to take for the trip to Canada, where to exchange German currency in Canada (and what amount to expect in return), where to go in Quebec to find reliable help or guidance for the continuation of the journey, and what kinds of people to avoid to keep from being defrauded or swindled. On this latter subject, Canada pamphlets frequently emphasized how much less of a problem swindlers posed in Canada than in the United States.¹³³

To lessen immigrant fears about how they would fare once settled in Canada, the brochures offered two general assurances. First, they predicted

the Canadian reception awaiting the newcomers would be friendly, encouraging, and helpful. A Canadian pamphlet from 1862 asserted in its opening lines that the German immigrant was especially valued: "Canada is almost the only land where the German immigrant is treated both before the law and in practical matters just the same as any native-born Canadian."¹³⁴ Second, the brochures described success as highly probable for the would-be German settler. In Canada the social gradations and inequalities of privilege and status that prevailed in Europe simply did not exist, and the only qualities a settler needed were industry, diligence, and skill. In short, merit prevailed. "There were," Wagner wrote, "no monopolies, no exclusive privileges, no great unbridgeable divisions between social classes to prevent or delay the advancement of an honourable and hard-working man ... In truth, Canada is a land of hope that disillusions no man."¹³⁵

To validate such claims, the brochures included testimonials from immigrants ensconced in Canada. For example, in 1862 the agent William Sinn reported in a promotional brochure the fates of ninety-five German families he had helped settle in County Renfrew, Upper Canada. According to him, forty had made great progress with their farmsteads within eighteen months of landing in Canada. After adding up the cost of the groups' farms and their farming expenses from the time they took up residence, Sinn calculated that each family had made a \$220 profit. The agent followed this analysis with a statement by his charges: "We all are satisfied with the government land we purchased. It has yielded bumper crops. If in the beginning we had little means, we easily found paid employment on the surrounding farms. Thus we were able to secure what was necessary until our own farms provided for us." Appended to this statement appeared the names of the forty German farmers who had, in their own words, "signed and given [the testimonial] in our homes in the townships of Alice and Wilberforce in the month of October, 1860."¹³⁶

Besides employing brochures, German agents promoting emigration to Canada used the immigration press. In the period 1846-75 eight different newspapers devoted to emigration appeared in Germany, the two most significant being the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* and the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung*. Published in Rudolstadt with a circulation estimated at between 500 and 1,000 copies, the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* appeared three times a week from 1846 to 1871. The Bremen-based *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* appeared each Monday from 1852 to 1875, and its circulation approximated that of its Rudolstadt competitor.¹³⁷ Both papers published long, informative articles describing Canada's institutions, traditions, and natural conditions. Canada's agents not only had their views printed in these newspapers but on occasion even had their services delineated. These apologists regularly submitted letters allegedly written by their

clients in Canada to relatives or friends in Germany. Generally, such letters painted rosy pictures of prosperity and contentment in the wilds of British North America.

The following examples from the *Deutsche Auswanderer-Zeitung* are illustrative. Beginning in December 1852 and continuing into the next summer, the Bremen weekly ran a series of fifteen letters from "C.B." Written by one whose language betrayed a sophistication beyond that of the usual farmer or artisan correspondent, these letters describe nearly everything a typical brochure did, but with markedly more enthusiasm.¹³⁸ Apparently no pretext existed for the paper to restrain the author's hyperbole, because C.B. professed to report as a Canadian citizen writing the truth about Canada to a personal friend in Germany. And the truth was mighty indeed. The letters described a beautiful land richly endowed with renewable resources, blessed with a dynamic and civil population, and governed under a sympathetic and responsible political system. Individuals enjoyed personal freedom, low taxes, excellent schools, and helpful and friendly neighbours. In short, the epistles painted a blissful picture. For any immigrant who truly tried to make a go of it, failure was virtually impossible. "Only those farmers," C.B. wrote in the letter of 11 January 1853, "will fail who believe they can live a life of luxury on the income of a small holding ... On the other hand, those who understand work and attempt to create viable farms with their own resources rather than with someone else's money will make a successful go of it."¹³⁹

Although the immigrant press reproduced some actual correspondence from Canada, most letters home to Germany usually circulated in their original form among relatives, friends, and hometown folk. The exact volume of such letters remains unknown, but copious correspondence was produced by nineteenth-century German immigrants in the United States.¹⁴⁰ Because the German-Canadian community in this period was much smaller and generally of less recent origin than America's Germans, the volume of letters sent home from Canada would have been much smaller. Reduced volume probably translated into less influence, but how much less influence in stimulating or inducing others to leave for Canada is impossible to know. Whether desire to leave was produced by family members beckoning to be joined in North America, agent agitation, newspaper editorials, or persuasive brochures, migration to Canada in the middle of the nineteenth century still represented a costly and uncertain undertaking.

Emigration and Immigration: The Role of Governments

Regardless of the source of the desire to leave or of the role played by agencies in assisting departure, the emigrant had to be legally free to depart before actual movement out of Europe could occur. Essentially, the freedom to leave was a political issue involving the position of the individual

German state governments on emigration. During the nineteenth century the emigration policies of the several governments passed through various phases reflecting support, hostility, and indifference. In the first phase, from the eighteenth century into the early years of the nineteenth century, emigration was viewed in purely mercantilist terms: it represented a threat to the state's military and economic potential and was therefore opposed. Evaluating the history of Germany's emigration in the early nineteenth century, the scholar Eugen von Philippovich wrote in 1886 that German states that allowed their subjects to emigrate were always "pressured by the spectre of economic and military disadvantages associated with emigration." In this nightmarish vision, "the 100,000 emigrants that Germany each year sends abroad form a splendidly equipped army that leaves the country and then disappears without a trace."¹⁴¹ Reflecting this fear of losing wealth and potential, many state governments tried to prevent their subjects from leaving through licensing, passports, departure taxes, and bureaucratic dissuasion. In the southwest, where the hemorrhaging was most intense, even more extreme measures were applied. For example, in 1817 Baden's government expressly prohibited its subjects from emigrating between the months of May and November.¹⁴²

The second phase of emigration politics commenced in the middle of the 1830s in response to a dramatic increase in emigration, particularly to North America. Lack of either an adequate emigration policy or appropriate official regulations in the several German states led to many abuses that in turn caused much suffering among the departing. Eventually public disapproval forced the abandonment of official efforts to prevent emigration and the adoption instead of regulations assisting emigrants in leaving. The Hansa embarkation centres Bremen and Hamburg led in establishing regulations to protect emigrants from exploitation and to facilitate their exodus. The impact of the new acceptance and assistance policy remained modest, however, as most state governments, if no longer hostile, tended to be passive observers. But any vigorous state intervention in emigration required that the earlier mercantilist hostility be abandoned, which occurred only gradually after 1830. Thus, official state involvement remained for the most part restricted to monitoring agent activity or warning off would-be emigrants from leaving Germany.¹⁴³

Not until the hungry forties were these lingering interferences replaced by much greater governmental acceptance along with expanded assistance for those departing, marking the third phase of German emigration politics. Because the economic crisis and resultant social upheaval of the 1840s stimulated out-migration, public awareness and discussion of the "emigration problem" increased accordingly. According to Klaus Bade, three schools of thought about emigration emerged. First, there was what he labelled a "romantic-volkish" one which lamented out-migration as a loss of national

potential. For this group, emigration constituted a kind of bloodletting with serious consequences for the nation's future. A second group viewed emigration as an important tool for coping with the social and economic exigencies caused by Germany's recent population explosion. For them, emigration constituted a safety valve that could relieve the pressures threatening social stability and property. A third faction argued for aggressive state regulation of emigration through appropriate laws, and the encouragement of private associations to organize and direct the flow of those leaving to Germany's advantage. Specifically, this group favoured the creation of closed German settlements in the emigrant receiving lands or the establishment of outright German colonies overseas. Such settlements would benefit the fatherland just as British or French overseas possessions advantaged those nations.¹⁴⁴

From such debate, emigration emerged in the late 1840s as an important political issue. Thus, in the 1848 revolution, the Frankfurt National Assembly decreed that the freedom to emigrate constituted a fundamental right for all Germans. Although the National Assembly's constitution was never promulgated, numerous German states later recognized this right and incorporated it into their laws. Even conservative Prussia included a provision in its constitution of 1850 that "the freedom to emigrate can only be limited by military obligations. Departure taxes may not be charged."¹⁴⁵ Thus after the 1840s no German government supported prohibiting emigration outright. Indeed, the opposite became the rule, particularly among local and regional public functionaries who increasingly espoused the "safety valve" policy. These officials viewed the rising number of indigent and unemployed as potential social problems endangering both the region's peace and the local government's solvency. As a result, programs providing public funds to pay for the emigration of paupers and petty criminals expanded. Paid emigration proponents claimed that funding out-migration cost far less than maintaining such misfits on the public welfare rolls.¹⁴⁶ Few provisions, if any, were made for those dumped abroad. The small cash payments emigrants received from their German sponsors on landing in Canada, for example, usually turned out to be inadequate. In effect, they left as paupers and arrived in their new homelands in the same condition.¹⁴⁷

Paid emigration programs appeared in the states of Baden, Württemberg, and Hesse. Of these, the Grand Duchy of Baden developed the most complete system for paying emigrants to leave, a direct result of the disastrous economic conditions plaguing the duchy after 1845. Through financial support of emigration, the government hoped to reduce the skyrocketing costs of supporting its growing number of indigents. Although often badly organized and administered, this state-supported emigration helped reduce the duchy's overall population by over 3 percent between 1852 and 1855. Paid emigration supporters claimed that reduction of the pauper and

petty-criminal class through emigration led to a substantial decline in serious crimes, a drastic reduction in the number of beggars, and an increase in work opportunities and wages for labourers at home. To the extent that this was true, "Baden's emigration politics," Christine Hansen concludes, "were very successful."¹⁴⁸

In Württemberg and Hesse, funding for paid emigration fell largely to local parishes and communities, although Württemberg backed private agencies and local officials with state funds as well as encouragement. The Hessian government in Darmstadt did not go as far in providing monetary assistance, but local communities seeking to export their poor had Darmstadt's blessing. Successful local initiatives in sponsoring emigration were common. For example, in Württemberg in 1852 the authorities in Gotzingen financed thirty-two paupers to Peru. From the early 1840s in Hesse, local parishes actively raised money to sponsor emigration. Occasionally, such sponsorship included the out-migration of whole villages. The Grosszimmern Affair of 1846 is illustrative. From Grosszimmern, a small town east of Darmstadt, 600 to 700 paupers and petty criminals were exported en masse to New York, the total cost being only 50,000 gulden.¹⁴⁹ Hesse's efforts at eliminating its poor normally included payment only for transportation out of Germany, stranding immigrants in their new homeland without enough funds to avoid the local poorhouse. The failure to provide for their charges' welfare after leaving Germany revealed that the "parishes were intent above all on freeing themselves of their 'troublemakers' as quickly as possible and what happened to them after departure was of no interest. Any responsibility for the emigrants had been rejected."¹⁵⁰

In Prussia would-be emigrants, whether petty criminals or paupers, received no official state aid to leave. Despite considerable emigration from its western lands in the 1840s, Prussia's rulers never developed a clear emigration policy. Conservative circles may have discussed, for example, German colonies backed by Prussia, but officially Berlin expressed a healthy skepticism, if not overt hostility, toward any kind of emigration throughout the period 1850-70. The official disapproval notwithstanding, local Prussian communities, especially in the economically hard-hit Rhineland, did occasionally support exporting their poor. Conversely, in extreme cases Prussia's central government intervened to prevent emigration. As a response to the abuses of the Brazilian plantation system, Prussia in 1859 prohibited its subjects from migrating to that country.¹⁵¹ With the decline of emigrant numbers in the late 1850s, the emigration problem ceased to be a major concern in Prussia. In 1860 William Wagner reported from Berlin to his overseers in Canada that he had met with the Prussian minister of trade and a senior Berlin police official and that they had agreed to allow him to carry on his recruitment work unimpeded.¹⁵² Apparently Canada was per-

ceived as neither a bad place to live nor a land where large numbers of Prussians would head. Later in the 1860s the crisis in Prussian domestic politics and then the wars of Bismarck overshadowed all else, and the emigration issue became nearly moot, as elsewhere in Germany. As Mack Walker puts it, "Germans did not do much analyzing or theorizing about the *Auswanderung* between 1855 and the unification."¹⁵³

While the migration policies in the German states in the two decades after 1850 shifted from hostility to acceptance to indifference, Canadian governmental policy reflected no such wild swings but rather a lack of direction and uncertainty about how to respond to or indeed create immigration. As noted above, much of this uncertainty related to the general political and economic situation in British North America. Economic weakness, political stalemate, and the failure of the *laissez faire* British government to provide leadership decreed that forceful and innovative immigration policies would not materialize. Regulations for British subjects migrating to Canada remained virtually nonexistent. Even in the terrible midcentury famine years, when thousands of destitute Irish and Highland Scots sought refuge in Canada, the British and Canadian governments did nothing to regulate the flood of indigents pouring into the country. Canada also received some German immigrants with insufficient funds to support themselves.

The emigration from Baden and Württemberg to Canada in the early 1850s affords a good example of the confluence of German and Canadian emigration policies at this time. As noted, in the late 1840s and early 1850s southwest Germany suffered grievously from economic collapse and social turmoil. Both Baden and Württemberg dumped some of their poor in Canada. Compared to the United States, where several thousand paupers were delivered in the period, Canada received modest numbers. The immigration agent in Quebec recorded thirty paupers from Baden landing in 1853 and 422 in 1854. William Sinn noted that of the 11,012 persons who had landed in Quebec in 1854 "473 of them were so far as I could make out proletarians or beggars, whose emigration costs had been paid by their local communities. Moreover, 425 [of the 473] were from the Grand Duchy of Baden. As support money, they received from their home towns on arrival in Canada ten gulden or about four dollars."¹⁵⁴

The landing of such indigents did not go unnoticed. The British government protested in February 1855 to the Presidium of the Diet of the German Confederation that during 1854 Baden had sent 422 paupers to Quebec. These persons, the testy British note pointed out, "presented an appearance of such squalor and destitution, scantily clothed, ignorant of our language, without any particular destination in view and possessed of but a small sum, paid to each on landing here, which at most would be barely sufficient for a week's support." The note condemned the audacity of "a foreign

state to relieve itself of paupers already physically ill adapted to labour and thrown on a country requiring the aid of a robust and energetic emigration."¹⁵⁵ In December 1855 the British minister Alexander Malet sent a similar protest to the authorities in Bremen, Frankfurt, and Württemberg decrying the recent landing of indigent emigrants from Württemberg in Saint John, New Brunswick. The note informed the German authorities that ninety poverty-stricken immigrants had been sent at the public expense to Canada via Rotterdam and Liverpool. Fifty-seven of them had been so indigent that they had to be sent to the poorhouse, where they became public charges.¹⁵⁶ This aggrieved British response rings not altogether convincing, since the British themselves had been dumping paupers, orphans, and other undesirables in Canada on a regular basis from the time of the social upheavals associated with the post-Napoleonic years right through the Irish potato famine crisis.¹⁵⁷

In his study of assisted emigration from Württemberg to North America, Gerhard Bassler notes that among the paupers dumped in Canada in the mid-1850s were "beggars, former convicts, unmarried women with children, all kinds of trouble makers and wards of the community but also large numbers of individuals and families who had been prosperous until ... reduced to utter poverty by forces beyond their control." Bassler's examples include a forty-three-year-old former owner of a turner's shop and a fifty-nine-year-old blacksmith who had formerly owned a forty-acre estate. Both men had lost all their real property and personal wealth; both had families (the smith had nine children and a wife) for whom they could no longer provide; both had been reduced to utter despair by their abject conditions. Distraught in the extreme, both men saw no other alternative than emigration, and petitioned their community for assistance to leave the district of Weinsberg. The local officials granted their requests and sponsored their journey to Saint John, New Brunswick, where they were promptly placed in the poorhouse.¹⁵⁸

Canada could not prevent such dumping until its immigration policies had been more clearly defined, and that had to wait until Confederation. In 1868 Ottawa acted. Using public health and the prevention of disease as justifications, Parliament passed an act regulating immigrants landing at the port of Quebec. The act provided that any vessel arriving in Quebec would be immediately inspected by a government-appointed physician who would examine not only the health of immigrants but also their material assets in order to determine whether they could pay their own way to their final destination. If the doctor determined that an immigrant had sufficient assets, he would grant a permit to land in Canada. If an immigrant were deemed to be without the necessary funds, the landing permit would be withheld. Any ship's officer who allowed the landing of persons without the necessary permit would be subject to a heavy fine.

The Mechanics of Migration: Travel from Germany to Canada

Emigrating from Germany to Canada involved three stages: departure from Germany, the sea voyage to North America, and the journey in Canada to the place of settlement. Each stage of an emigrant's odyssey was unique, fraught with problems, difficulties, and dangers. Throughout, the migrant had to adjust to frequently frustrating procedures and new, often hostile surroundings. The process lost some of its worst nightmare-like qualities after 1850, with the introduction of new transportation technology and the development of more sympathetic attitudes in government and society toward migrants in both the sending and receiving lands. Nevertheless, into the twentieth century emigration remained a taxing ordeal for those brave or desperate enough to undertake it.

In emigration's first stage, the migrant had to find transportation to the coast. In the early nineteenth century, migrants journeyed by foot, horse-drawn wagon, and river barge for several weeks to reach the ports of embarkation. Frequently their seaward travel was interrupted by long waits for proper transport, and once on the Rhine the numerous toll stations along the river prolonged their trip even more. After 1840 the railroad and river steamboats greatly speeded up the process. As the volume of migrant traffic increased from the 1840s, it concentrated in centres such as Mannheim, Frankfurt am Main, Cologne, Leipzig, and Berlin. These centres, where emigrants transferred between modes of transportation, posed their own dangers. Bickelmann describes the hazards: "Businessmen who made a living from emigration found here a rich field for activity. Emigrants were surrounded by agents, representatives of the shipping and railway companies, porters, moneychangers and hawkers of all kinds, who attempted to beguile them into purchases or services of every possible kind. Trickery by hotelkeepers and transport firms, which the emigrants had always had to reckon with, were a part of daily life in such places, as a result of the sheer volume of emigrant traffic."¹⁵⁹

Although in the first decades of the nineteenth century, Antwerp, Le Havre, and Rotterdam functioned as the main places of embarkation, Bremen emerged in the 1830s as an important port for Germans travelling to North America. Bremen's original advantage derived from its 1832 requirement that ship owners provide food for the emigrants during the voyage. In 1851 Bremen also established an information bureau for emigrants (*Nachweisungsbureau für Auswanderer*). This office provided information on such matters as lodging, food, and other travel-related expenses while also protecting the emigrants from being swindled. Hamburg, which had originally viewed poor emigrants as potential social problems and consequently restricted their entry into the city, soon recognized the profitability of the emigrant trade. After rescinding its discriminatory law in 1837, Hamburg quickly developed into a significant rival for Bremen, even setting up its

own emigrant assistance office in 1851. To this was added the Hamburg Deputation, a commission for dispute resolution charged with seeing that contracts were upheld and that emigrants received legal protection.¹⁶⁰

From these beginnings, both Hamburg and Bremen gradually established more comprehensive laws to protect emigrants in their cities. The Hamburg authorities established a branch office of the information bureau in the main train station to advise emigrants as they arrived. Travellers needed such assistance because they were usually met as they departed their trains by local hotelkeepers or their agents competing, sometimes in fraudulent fashion, for business. To counter this, the information bureau officials passed out leaflets and put up posters instructing emigrants to come directly to their station office for assistance. Eventually hotel personnel were banned from the railroad station altogether, leaving the information office staff and the police as the only reception committee. In 1868 Hamburg increased its protective measures by licensing hotelkeepers dealing with emigrants and requiring minimum sanitary conditions for housing and feeding emigrants in the city's hotels. In 1870 Hamburg's hotel owners were required to post price lists for room and board and for any tickets, utensils, or other supplies offered for sale to emigrants.¹⁶¹

Measures to protect the emigrants developed differently in Bremen. Compared to Hamburg, Bremen suffered from an obvious disadvantage in attracting emigrants: the port of Bremerhaven was at least a day's journey down the Weser River until 1862. To make the Bremer/Bremerhaven option more attractive, a building specifically designed to house waiting emigrants was constructed in Bremerhaven in 1850. This did much to solve the problem of delays in shipping out due to inadequate winds. The introduction of steamships to ply the Weser in the late 1850s, and even more important the opening of a railroad line from Bremen to the coast in 1862, greatly facilitated the journey to Bremerhaven. This allowed emigrants to remain in Bremen until the day their ships departed for the new world. Like their Hamburg counterparts, the Bremen city authorities sought to ensure the well-being and fair treatment of travellers during their sojourns in the city. The room and board arrangements in Bremen, however, were controlled by contract between the information bureau and the various hotelkeepers. Bremen's hotel owners contracted for the right to house and feed the emigrants. In exchange, they agreed to allow the bureau to set standards for housing and general hygiene. Together the hotel owners and bureau personnel agreed upon prices to be charged for rooms, food, and other services.¹⁶²

In 1850 sailing ships still carried most emigrants to North America, although ships driven by steam power existed. The new technology gradually won out in the next two decades. In his account of nineteenth-century emigration from Great Britain to Canada, Edwin Guillet claims, "Sailing-

vessels predominated until the end of the 1863 season, during which 55 percent patronized them; but in subsequent years the steamship quickly assumed the lead, and by 1870 the number of sailing-ship passengers was negligible."¹⁶³ For the port of New York the shift to steam was equally dramatic. "In 1856," Birgit Gelberg writes, "only 5 percent of those who landed in New York came by steamship; in 1870 that number had increased to 88 percent."¹⁶⁴ The Hamburg-American Line (HAPAG) started a steamship route to New York in 1856, and Bremen's North German Lloyd did the same a year later.¹⁶⁵ Günter Moltmann reports that the last sailing ship to ferry emigrants from Hamburg to North America completed its voyage in 1873.¹⁶⁶

The transition to steamships in the German carrying trade to Canada occurred more slowly. In fact, it appears that throughout the period 1850-70, if Germans travelled to Canada on steamships, they were non-German ships. For example, in the four years from 1858 to 1861 Hamburg sent twenty ships to Quebec, all of them under sail.¹⁶⁷ Consul Gustav Beling's report for 1863 listed a total of 148 ships bringing emigrants from Great Britain and Germany to Canada in that year, 77 powered by steam and 71 by sail. The twelve of these ships from Germany were all sailing vessels.¹⁶⁸ Data from Bremen from the late 1860s illustrate just how completely the sailing vessel still reigned. In 1867 eight ships, all of them sailing vessels, made the voyage from Bremen to Quebec. In 1868, thirteen Bremen ships made the same crossing, and in 1869 Bremen sent only two vessels to Quebec, all powered by sail.¹⁶⁹ Over the years 1861 to 1867 a total of 5,231 passengers travelled to Quebec from Bremen on twenty ships. The number of passengers per ship averaged just over 260. During the same seven-year period, New York received 212,191 passengers on 653 Bremen ships with an average passenger load of 325.¹⁷⁰ In this much more extensive and lucrative New York business the steamship played the leading role. The small passenger volume to Quebec, plus the more limited opportunities for return carriage, determined the use of sailing vessels, for wind-driven craft cost considerably less than steamships to run.

The major disadvantage of sailing vessels lay in the greater length of the voyage by sail. The journey from Bremen or Hamburg to Quebec, New York, or Baltimore by sailing ship typically lasted six to eight weeks. Of the eight ships that sailed to Canada from Bremen in 1867, the fastest made Quebec in thirty-three days, the slowest in fifty-five. Most of the other ships required between forty-five and fifty days to complete the crossing. Fluctuations in the weather caused the varying length of sailing voyages, because ships were always at the mercy of the wind. Often sailing vessels could not leave on their scheduled departure date because there was no wind or, worse, an ill wind. Steamships, even the early ones, reduced the average duration of the Atlantic crossing by two-thirds. In 1867 steamers crossed from Bremen

to New York in fourteen days on average. Steamships that left from Liverpool managed the crossing in even less time.¹⁷¹

Compared to steamships, the disadvantages of sailing ships were apparent in nearly all aspects of the voyage. The duration of the voyage by sail exacerbated the problems caused by inadequate sanitation facilities. As a consequence, cholera, typhus, and other serious illnesses occurred substantially more often on sailing ships. Mortality rates among immigrants making the Atlantic crossing declined dramatically after the adoption of the steamship. Providing food for the passengers on sailing vessels posed greater problems than on steamships. The radically shortened trip by steamer allowed passengers access to greater amounts of fresher, more nutritious food. The rations of hard bread and salted meat characteristic of the age of sail ceased to be regular fare.¹⁷²

Regulations protecting emigrants in port developed before adequate measures were adopted for the ships themselves. Since the migrant trade had been largely incidental in the early nineteenth century, with passengers travelling individually or in small numbers on freight vessels, protective regulations had not seemed necessary. The upsurge in emigrant numbers after 1830, and particularly during the 1840s, led to ships devoted mostly to passenger transport. In the period 1850-70, most emigrants heading to North America travelled as steerage passengers, the steerage area being located directly below the main deck and extending for most of the ship's length. To maximize profits, shipping concerns attempted to convey as many passengers as possible on each ship, so the ship's steerage was characteristically overcrowded.

Primitive accommodations, little ventilation, and almost no illumination complicated the problem of overcrowding. The water furnished to passengers was frequently contaminated. "Water," the migration historian Marcus Hansen reports, "was stored in old sugar hogsheads, in oil casks which had never been cleaned, in vinegar, molasses and turpentine barrels ... Even under the most favorable conditions, the contents were almost undrinkable before the end of the journey. On some vessels gunpowder was sprinkled in the barrels as a preservative. This gave the water a blackish appearance and a repulsive taste which increased with time."¹⁷³ Most sailing ships (and many steamers), moreover, lacked any arrangements to provide food. Steerage passengers had to prepare their own meals with food brought on board with them. Again to quote Hansen: "No matter how dull life might be elsewhere on board, there was always fighting around the stove, and philosophically minded Germans quietly waiting their turn compared the government to the anarchy of the medieval empire when *'Faust Recht'* alone prevailed. Under such conditions breakfast was not ready until noon and dinner until night; and before the end of the journey both breakfast and dinner might be several days late."¹⁷⁴

Summing up the problems in 1866, the *Allgemeine Auswanderungszeitung* called for governments to establish and enforce definite regulations to curb abuses of passengers. There must be, the paper insisted, "strict separation of male and female passengers, regular cleaning of the sleeping quarters, adequate provisioning of the ships with food of good quality and sufficient quantity, and appropriate measures to provide medical care for the sick."¹⁷⁵ Although many abuses continued unabated, some efforts were made to alleviate them.

In regulations to improve food on board, Bremen and Hamburg led the way. As early as 1832 both cities required that their ships provide prepared food for their passengers. (This regulation was not adopted elsewhere until much later.) The first attempts to solve the oppressive overcrowding came in 1850, when Hamburg passed a law requiring that the height of the ceiling in steerage be at least five and a half feet. To this was added a regulation allotting to each passenger twelve square feet (3.67 square metres) as individual space. Regulations mandating bed size followed. The lack of fresh air in steerage led to a requirement in 1868 that ventilators be installed to provide adequate air circulation. To reduce sexual abuse and the accusations of rampant immorality prompted by the mixing of the sexes in steerage, the Hamburg Senate enacted a regulation in 1868 dividing the ship's steerage into three parts. Single men were placed in the forward portion, families allotted the middle section, and single women assigned to the stern. On the basis of Hamburg's success, Bremen adopted the same regulation in 1870. These rather timid moves did alleviate the more obvious abuses but they did not reduce the dangers passengers encountered from improper sanitation. Lavatory facilities remained totally inadequate, with as many as fifty persons typically assigned to one toilet. Arrangements for bathing and washing clothes, or even eating utensils, did not exist.¹⁷⁶

Given inadequate food and water, overcrowding, and the altogether primitive sanitary arrangements in steerage, conditions on most, if not all, immigrant vessels during the two decades after 1850 were horrendous. Nearly a hundred years before, Gottlieb Mittelberger, a German travelling to Pennsylvania, had described his steerage crossing:

Howbeit, during the passage there doth arise in the vessels an awful misery, stink, smoke, horror, vomiting, sea-sickness of all kinds, fever, purgings, headaches, sweats, constipations of the bowels, sores, scurvy, cancers, thrush and the like, which do wholly arise from the stale and strongly salted food and meat, and from the exceeding badness and nastiness of the water, from which many do wretchedly decline and perish. Thereto come also the dearth of provision, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, damp, fear, want, janglings and lamentings, with other hardships, inasmuch as lice do often breed and proliferate, most of all upon the sick, so that a man may brush them off his body.¹⁷⁷

Accounts describing the filth, the smells, the sickness, and the sufferings of steerage passage in the mid-nineteenth century had hardly changed from Mittelberger's time. In 1847, for example, Stephen E. DeVere, an Irish landowner who travelled to Canada as a steerage passenger in a sailing ship ferrying Irish immigrants, described conditions in the following terms:

Before the emigrant has been a week at sea he is an altered man ... Hundreds of poor people, men, women, and children of all ages are ... huddled together without light, air, wallowing in filth and breathing a fetid atmosphere, sick in body, dispirited in heart, the fever patients lying between the sound ... The food is generally ill-selected and seldom sufficiently cooked, in consequence of the insufficiency of the cooking places. The supply of water, hardly enough for cooking and drinking, does not allow washing. In many ships the filthy beds, teeming with all abominations, are never required to be brought on deck and aired.¹⁷⁸

The most infamous German sailing vessel of the period, the *Leipzig* out of Hamburg, earned the title "ship of death" when it arrived in New York in January 1868 with nearly a fifth of its passengers dead from cholera contracted during the voyage. The *Leipzig's* negative reputation caused "such anger and commotion among the public that the Hamburg owner changed the ship's name to *Liebig*."¹⁷⁹ The *Leipzig* case may have been worse than most, but death from malnutrition and especially contagious diseases such as cholera, typhus, and even smallpox occurred all too often on the immigrant ships of this period.

Although few, the voyages to Canada offered the same problems as other passages to the new world in the period 1850-70. A report on immigration to Canada for 1854, for example, listed 11,012 immigrants taking passage to Quebec that year. Of that number, 226 had died at sea; of these 192 were children under fourteen years of age. An additional 17 immigrants died in the quarantine station at Grosse Isle. Most of the victims died from cholera.¹⁸⁰ Twelve years later in 1866, the quarantine station at Grosse Isle reported similar news. Between April and October 1866, ten ships from Hamburg and Bremen transported 2,897 emigrants to be processed at Grosse Isle, all but 9 of whom travelled in steerage. Of the total, 71 perished at sea; another 81 arrived in Canada "sick." The vast majority of the deaths occurred during three voyages: on the *Pallas* 55 (11.2 percent) of the 491 passengers died, on the *Main* 12 (3 percent) of the 381 steerage travellers succumbed, and on the *Neckar* 22 (4 percent) of the 522 passengers were lost. The Grosse Isle inspectors attributed the deaths on the *Pallas* to measles – all the victims were children – on the *Main* to "cold and debility," and on the *Neckar* again to measles.¹⁸¹

The absence of adequate governmental supervision, particularly in the German lands and ports from which the emigrants set out, explains why such conditions persisted into the 1860s. Since most German states at this time, with the obvious exceptions of Hamburg and Bremen, still held ambivalent views on emigration, positive emigration policies had not been widely adopted in Germany. Without state protection, Germany's migrants to Canada and elsewhere were exposed on their journeys to a variety of abuses. Writing at the end of the nineteenth century, a melodramatic German patriot condemned the disastrous failure of Germany's governments to look after its departing sons and daughters: "The history of the care accorded to Germany's emigrants is a story of suffering, it is to a great extent a true martyr's history. This story dramatically illustrates the tragedy of our earlier political weakness and division. Ship fever decimated the emigrants until the 1860s. The journey to New York was a trip through the hell of immorality, misery, and lamentation." This description of the New York crossings apparently applied as well to some of the journeys ending in Montreal or Halifax.¹⁸²

One obvious problem involved securing timely legal recourse for abuses suffered at sea. For example, the *Gellert* left Hamburg on 18 April 1860, scheduled to sail directly to Quebec. On the way, the ship made an unplanned seventeen-day stopover in St. John's, Newfoundland, causing much inconvenience and expense to its passengers. When the ship finally landed in Quebec on 2 July, the passengers, including some Prussians en route to Wisconsin, sought to recover the extra expenses caused by the layover. In their petition to the Prussian consul at Quebec, eleven of the disgruntled emigrants claimed that the unscheduled delay had caused them "to lose the opportunity to plant potatoes and other vegetables this summer due to the loss of so many working days."¹⁸³ Although their cause of action was sound, they received no compensation for their losses. The Prussian consul in Quebec, George Pemberton, reported in August that the passengers had not pursued damages because "the necessity of keeping the passengers here [in Quebec] to give evidence would have put them to so much inconvenience and expense that it was better to abandon the claim altogether."¹⁸⁴

The case of the *Emil* involved more serious matters. The *Emil*, outfitted in Bremen but sailing under the flag of the North German Confederation, left Geestemunde on 3 April 1869 with 320 steerage passengers bound for Quebec. For this voyage it carried enough provisions for eighty days at sea. The passengers had been examined by a physician on the day of departure and all been found to be free of disease. Seven weeks later the ship arrived at Grosse Isle: several passengers had died; some had become sick enough to be hospitalized at Grosse Isle; and many were so weakened that further travel was impossible. After twelve of *Emil's* passengers appealed for help,

the Deutsche Gesellschaft in Montreal set up a committee to look into the matter and uncovered serious abuses. To begin with, the passengers, who had originally intended to emigrate to New York, found that when they arrived at the place of embarkation the ship they were to have travelled on was booked up. Agents at Geestemunde convinced them to take the waiting ship *Emil* to Quebec because Quebec “was very close to New York.” Once on board, they discovered worse accommodations than anticipated. One passenger told the committee that “the food was of such limited amount and such poor quality and fresh water so sparse that two male passengers died because of it.”¹⁸⁵ Indeed, the deliberate withholding of food became the most serious problem faced by the travellers, who believed malnutrition contributed directly to the sickness which began to plague large numbers in the third week of the voyage. The committee also heard bitter complaints about abuses received from the crew. For example, one immigrant told of how after arriving in Quebec’s harbour, they “had to wait on board for hours before receiving permission to disembark. During all this time, they received no food. Then just as they were leaving, the ship’s cook in a mocking gesture blew the whistle announcing meal time.”¹⁸⁶

Montreal’s Deutsche Gesellschaft also provided assistance for indigent *Emil* passengers stranded in Montreal. Soliciting help from other people and organizations in the city, the society made arrangements to cover the medical and other maintenance costs for those who were too sick or weak to continue their journeys. When the dust had settled, the society protested publicly in the *Montreal Gazette*:

These immigrants were landed at Quebec in direct violation of the law forbidding the landing of paupers; the Society has therefore brought these facts under the notice of the authorities at Quebec, so the law in question may be properly enforced. The experience of last summer ought to have sufficed to prompt the government to rigidly prohibit the landing of all immigrants unable to pay their passage inland ... Steps are also taken by the Society to urge the government of the North German Confederation through its consulate here of the imperative necessity to pass strict regulations for the carrying of immigrant passengers. The alleged inhuman treatment of the passengers on board the above named vessel will also be strictly inquired into.¹⁸⁷

Although both the Canadian and German authorities received news of these abuses, nothing was done either to indemnify the victims or to punish the culprits.

After a long, uncomfortable, and often dangerous voyage, the first view of North America, normally the coast of Newfoundland, appeared as a welcome sight indeed. Reaching Newfoundland’s shores, however, did not

signal the trip's end, for several hundred hazardous miles, or a week or two of sailing, remained before docking in Quebec. Once out of the treacherous coastal waters off Newfoundland and into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the emigrant ship had to negotiate such rocky hazards as St. Paul's Isle and Anticosti Island. Thirty-three miles below Quebec City, the ship passed through the quarantine inspection at Grosse Isle. Established in 1831, Grosse Isle had quickly earned an unsavoury reputation for its inadequate facilities to care for the sick and debilitated. By 1850 housing and medical arrangements had been markedly improved, and many of the abuses that had contributed to its earlier label as the "isle of death" abolished.¹⁸⁸

Because of continuing abuses and safety hazards throughout the period 1850-70, Ottawa finally acted to ensure the safety of passengers coming to Canada and to prevent the spread of disease once the immigrants landed. The Immigration Act of 1869 sought to protect immigrants in two ways. First, the statute was intended to guard travellers from health risks encountered during the voyage from Europe. To this end, for example, the statute imposed limits on the number of passengers a ship could carry. Second, in the spirit of the reforms instituted by Bremen and Hamburg a generation before, Canada's Immigration Act of 1869 addressed exploitation by unscrupulous innkeepers and merchants, who traditionally offered their services to the newly arrived. Those soliciting immigrant business had to be licensed, and hotel and boarding-house owners were required to post their price lists prominently. To fend off probable trouble, the act also prohibited the landing of indigents and imposed penalties on the ship captains who did so. Finally, Ottawa tried to make the immigrants' reception in Canada less bewildering by appointing government agents to meet the immigrant ships as they arrived and to assist newcomers in arranging temporary housing and travel on the next leg of their Canadian odyssey.¹⁸⁹

During the period 1850-70, the travel arrangements within British North America advanced considerably over earlier times. Steamboats replaced sailing ships and bateaux on lakes and rivers; the St. Lawrence canal system had been completed in the 1840s; railroad construction had made great strides; and passable, well-maintained roads into the interior expanded stage-coach travel. In 1851 James B. Brown, the author of a popular guidebook, wrote that "on arriving at Quebec emigrants may go direct from the ship's side on board of commodious steam vessels, without its being necessary for them to go on shore or to spend a shilling for transporting their luggage, or for any other purpose: and in those steam vessels they can be conveyed to their destination, to any of the main ports on the St. Lawrence or the Great Lakes without trans-shipment, and with great rapidity."¹⁹⁰ In 1854 A.C. Buchanan, who was first appointed resident superintendent and government agent for immigrants in Quebec in 1828, advertised combined train and steamboat fares that would take the newly arrived immigrant from

Quebec to Hamilton and on to Detroit or Chicago in only five days.¹⁹¹ Despite these undeniable advances, problems persisted. As late as 1867, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft zu Montreal* complained to Ottawa that the Grand Trunk Railway had recently transported a group of German immigrants from Port Levi west in boxcars with no ventilation, inadequate drinking water, and no water closets. Buchanan wrote the railway authorities denouncing the abuse and demanding an appropriate remedy. The railway promptly issued a circular requiring all agents and conductors "to do all they can for the comfort of the emigrants in route ... with particular attention ... to the comfort of emigrants obliged to travel in ordinary box cars."¹⁹²

Conclusion

In the two decades 1850-70 German emigration to British North America, which had expanded significantly in the desperate 1840s, continued but at a much less impressive pace. This slowdown reflected the larger economic, political, and social trends apparent in both Germany and Canada. In Germany the economy, plagued by crises in the late 1840s, improved after 1850 as the new industrial processes associated with the Industrial Revolution took off. At the same time rapid demographic growth continued. An expanding population coupled with fundamental economic change that made some occupations redundant and completely abolished others prompted large numbers of Germans to think of leaving home. New technology in the form of railroads and more efficient passenger ships (both sail and steam-powered vessels) made travel out of Europe and within Canada faster and far less difficult as well. New, more sophisticated advertising and solicitation techniques by those promoting emigration to Canada brought the country to the attention of increasing numbers of Germans. Finally, the laws affecting migration had caught up to its social and economic realities. In the German states, freedom of movement became a legal right as the last vestiges of earlier restrictions on individual movement disappeared. The German lands therefore offered excellent recruiting grounds for possible migrants to Canada.

Despite all these apparent advantages, Canada failed to lure significant numbers of new immigrants from the German states. In Canada the political system had been altered fundamentally during this period, but the country's economy and society had not. Traditional habits prevailed in immigration. Canada's governments continued to prefer British immigrants over "foreigners" and devoted most of their funds and efforts to winning converts in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, in the decade of Confederation, Canada's leaders gradually concluded that if the country were to survive the threat of annexation by the United States and populate the newly acquired western lands it had to assume a more active role in promoting immigration beyond the mother country. As a result, the timid beginnings

of a policy supporting more non-British immigrants were seen, including the first modest efforts to solicit emigrants in Germany and elsewhere on the Continent. The recognition that non-British immigrants were required for Canada's future also strengthened the belief in the need for a new, more alluring Canadian image to replace earlier negative stereotypes.

In these various ways, the period 1850-70 adumbrated what would develop in the ensuing two decades: earlier trends were consolidated and developed and new approaches tried as pull and push forces continued to be exerted from Canada and Germany. Although a clear, forceful policy in favour of either British or Continental immigration had not emerged by 1870, migration from Germany to Canada continued apace because governmental policy became somewhat more supportive and less prohibitive. In addition, solicitation techniques developed, technology improved, and facilitation networks became more sophisticated. Because of its inchoate immigration policy, Canada could not immediately compete with the United States, which had a huge lead in solicitation experience, resources, and success. Canada did, however, begin to emerge from the unknown and assert its claim as a home for Germany's emigrants. Although Canadian success in Germany remained modest, the romantic wilderness touted for its untapped natural wealth and its superior human institutions finally began to attract some attention.