

clusive new immigrants poured into those areas until once again, as in the first years of the settlement, every homestead along the lake shore was occupied. These people could not possibly have clung to their holdings without the help given by their earnings or returns from the new industry.

The new industry also served to add to the population of Selkirk and lay the foundation for the new village at Gimli. It was not long before some of the fishermen gave up their farms completely and built their humble homes in those fishing centres. Gimli was not as advantageous a location as Selkirk but there they were with their fellow compatriots and near enough to Selkirk that they were in easy reach of their employment. By 1900 there was already quite an assortment of shanties, log houses and some modest dwellings set down helter skelter on the lake front for no one by that time could locate the original survey as stakes for the townsite. This withdrawal of settlers from the farms in no way affected the rural population, for every departure was immediately replaced by an eager and hopeful new settler.

The fishing industry truly served the south settlement of new immigrants, but it soon brought to light evidence of some deleterious effects. With almost all the young men from the farms engaged in the industry and away from home all summer and fall and usually in the winter, too, interest in clearing the farmland diminished and finally disappeared altogether. When the parents who had through diligence, industry and perseverance persisted in the back breaking toil of clearing about an acre a year of heavy bushland, saw the lack of interest of the new generation, they just gave up the struggle to improve their holdings. The cessation of interest in improving the farm lands was quickly noted by outside travellers through the settlement who without discerning the true cause, blamed it on laziness and lack of ambition on the settlers' part. The same condition almost lost the lake shore the railway some years later, for when pressure was put upon the railway officials to extend their lines in the lakeshore region, they were quick to point out that people who had nothing more to show after a quarter of a century of settlement than had the settlers in New Iceland, were not even deserving of consideration for the high cost of providing them with rail service.

Even thoughtful settlers who had confined all their efforts to developing their lands like Gunnsteinn Eyolfson at the Icelandic River, writing to the Icelandic weekly charged the fishermen with being lazy and made worthless by their occupations and claimed that the fishing industry had actually been of greater harm to the settlement than any good that it might have brought. Deductions such as this made by railway authorities and others were no doubt hasty and without regard to the circumstances. Each fisherman no doubt, in the faraway days of the nineties produced a great deal more of natural wealth for the country than did the individual settler in the bush land. That they should neglect