 **The Challenge of Boosting Immigration**

**Introduction**

* Sir John A. had died in 1891;
* Government lacked direction after his death;
* Wilfrid Laurier led the Liberals to power in 1896;
* Laurier was determined to deal with important issues for Canada’s future.

**The Population Challenge**

* First challenge Laurier faced was Canada’s small population;
* Population was less than 5 million in 1891 and unequally divided among country.

**Immigration Campaigns**

* Clifford Sifton was appointed minister of the interior in 1896;
* Organized immigration campaigns in many European languages to attract settlers he was looking for;
* Campaign included free land, rich soil, government assistance, healthy climate, and freedom of oppression;
* Immigration plan also actively recruited American white farming families.

**Why the Immigrants Came**

* “Push” factors – reasons why immigrants left their homelands:
  + Lack of land;
  + Lack of personal freedom;
  + Threat of war.
* “Pull” factors – reasons why immigrants chose Canada:
  + Free land;
  + Good farming conditions;
  + Ethnic communities.

**The Growth of the Prairies**

* Immigration campaigns were successful;
* Within 10 years, population of Prairies rose 195%;
* During Laurier years, Canada’s population expanded rapidly;
* Many did not speak English or French when they arrived;
* Canada started to become a multicultural nation.

**Dispersal of the Métis**

* Increasing flow of immigrant settlers disrupted the lives of the Métis;
* Settlers established farms, and developed large towns and cities;
* Métis moved out in search of land where they could hunt, fish, and trap.

**Conclusion**

* By 1900, many Métis sold their scrip because their land was far from family and friends or because it was poor land without access to water;
* Others were cheated out by land speculators;
* This left Métis people without much of a land base.