

more particulars than the Minister has yet given us as to the plan adopted to secure British immigrants, and as to the nature of the work engaged in by those officers who have been sent recently from this country to the old country to engage in that work. I do not think the Minister has yet given us that information, and that is the reason I ask for it. There is another matter to which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister. This afternoon, when the subject of the medical examination of the immigrants was under consideration, the hon. member for York, N.E. (Mr. Foster), expressed the opinion—and I think it is one in which we all concur—that it was eminently desirable that the closest and most rigid examination should be made of the immigrants at the port of embarkation; and I understood from the Minister that wherever practicable this was done. I would like to draw his attention to a statement which appears in yesterday's "Star" with reference to a meeting of a congressional sub-committee investigating immigration matters, which was held at New York on Monday, and to allegations which were made at that meeting and subsequently by Col. Laird, United States Commissioner of Immigration at Quebec, as to the character and quality of some of the immigrants who reached Canada at that port. If those allegations are correct it would appear as if the medical examination of the immigrants who reach that port was not as strict as it ought to be. Col. Laird is alleged in the report of the "Star" to say that, believing that the Dominion of Canada is no more desirous than the United States of harbouring paupers and permanently-diseased people, it is not without surprise that he finds how seldom the Canadian immigration officials will turn back undesirable immigrants. The view entertained by the people of Quebec appears to be that this allegation that pauper immigrants, unsound in mind and body, are permitted to land at Quebec, is a scare gotten up by New York steamship agents. But it appears from the statement of the United States Commissioner of Immigration at Quebec, that there is a laxity on the part of the Canadian officials in keeping out these undesirable immigrants who are brought to Quebec by steamships from different parts of the old land. The allegation is that the great majority of these undesirable immigrants are shipped at Liverpool, and I would like to ask the Minister what steps are taken there to prevent these people embarking for Canada; and if they escape the vigilance of his officers on the other side of the water, what is to prevent them being dumped on our shores?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I presume that the hon. gentleman is aware that there is no Exclusion Act in the Dominion of Canada at the present time, and

Mr. CLARKE.

there never has been, so far as I am aware. Therefore, it is no part of the duty of the Government, under the law to appoint agents for the purpose of keeping people from coming to Canada.

Mr. CLARKE. But I take it that these references are to immigrants who are assisted to come to Canada, for whom a bonus is paid to the steamship agents.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. The persons who are assisted to come are reported to our agents here, and they are passed upon by our agents at the ports at which they land, and are subjected to a careful and thorough medical examination. That particular quarantine work is not done under the charge of my department, but under the Department of Agriculture; but I have no reason to doubt that it is done as thoroughly and carefully as it is possible to have it done. The embarkation of these people is carried on under the rules and regulations of the ports from which they embark, and it is not possible for us to change those rules or to affect them by anything we can do. We can only decide what we shall do with respect to the payment of the bonus. So far as the Gaiicians are concerned, we have stopped the payment of the bonus from the 1st of June, as I have informed the House a number of times. I do not fancy that there can be any great improvement on the method of the medical examination. It is under the consideration of both the Department of Agriculture and my department, and if any improvement can be suggested by the special officers engaged in looking after that work, both the Minister of Agriculture and myself will be most happy to carry out any feasible suggestions that may be made. With regard to the letter which the hon. gentleman has read, I may say that it is just the ordinary letter which a man who has been pestering the department for years to get work and has not got it, would write. It is just the sort of letter we often receive as the result of not entertaining all kinds of propositions made to us from time to time by people who promise things which, I think, they are not able to carry out. In the first year that I was in office, the heaviest task I had to perform was to answer letters from people who declared their ability to get immigrants from various countries. They were the most complete humbugs that the department had anything to do with. I do not mean to say that the gentleman who wrote the letter which my hon. friend has read is in every sense a humbug; but if all his statements are on a par with those in regard to matters with which I am acquainted, I would not advise the hon. gentleman to rely on much what he says. He says that I called to see him at Fernie last year. I have not the least recollection of anything connected with the