

the utterly hopeless sort of way that has been adopted and has been struggling along up to the present.

The CHAIRMAN.—On behalf of the Committee I have to thank you for the valuable information you have placed before us. No doubt the Committee will give it consideration. We will now hear Mr. Robertson, Assistant Superintendent of Immigration. I think Mr. Robertson, in order to facilitate matters, you might take up the question of booking agents, which has been discussed a good deal with reference to immigration. I might tell you that there is a feeling in the country that we are paying a lot of money to those people in the old country for bringing out immigrants here. They are supposed to bring out a certain class, and the feeling is—whether it is right or wrong, you will probably be able to say—that the class of immigrants is not the class that we are supposed to get for the money we pay. I would like you to take that up. I have here a return made to the House which will probably give you a starting point. It gives the number of booking agents in the British Isles, what they received from the government for bringing out farm labourers and female domestic servants, and what there is on the continent of Europe. In the years 1910-11 we have bonus payments to booking agents in the British Isles, \$89,969.77; in 1911-12, \$109,942.87; in 1912-13, \$110,432.02. Then on the continent of Europe we had in 1910-11, \$10,516.86; in 1911-12, \$10,638.53; in 1912-13, \$8,239.25. This statement shows we pay a bonus of £1 on adults and ten shillings on those between one and eighteen years of age. Those amounts are paid to the booking agents on farmers, farm labourers and female domestic servants sent to Canada. That is what we would like to have light upon. We want to find out what kind of people are coming from the British Islands and elsewhere.

Mr. E. B. ROBERTSON, Assistant Superintendent of Immigration, said: There are in the British Isles about three thousand booking agents. In the past they have run largely on the principle of 'once a booking agent, always a booking agent,' because the steamship companies have not exercised any very close supervision over them, and a man appointed as an agent usually remained as an agent until his death, and was succeeded by his son or grandson. There are now about eleven hundred booking agents who do little Canadian business, leaving 1900 active agents. These booking agents sell tickets; that is their business. They operate in an office, somewhat as Mr. Duncan does here for the Canadian Pacific railway, or Mr. Montgomery for the Canadian Northern railway. They sell tickets to whoever comes in and asks.

Hon. Mr. BOLDOC.—They refuse nobody?

Mr. ROBERTSON.—They refuse no person.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.—And if an immigrant has made up his mind to come to Canada, and goes there to buy a ticket, that ticket agent gets his bonus from the government?

Mr. ROBERTSON.—Providing that particular immigrant belongs to the bonus class, providing he is a farm labourer, or in the case of a female, she is a domestic servant.

Hon. Mr. JAFFRAY.—How does he get assurance that the immigrant belongs to that class?

Mr. ROBERTSON.—When a person purchases a ticket he knows nothing about this bonus. He is asked certain questions on a form provided by the government, and this he fills in, stating his occupation at the time he purchased the ticket, what his occupation has been during past years, and special reference is made to the length of time he has been engaged as a farm labourer, or if females as a domestic servant, and where and when such employment was followed. Of their own free will they sign that form before they have any idea of the purposes for which the form is prepared.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.—Except that the party may have been coached or informed?

Mr. ROBERTSON.—There is a bare possibility of that. Then when they come to the ocean port of arrival they are questioned as to their past actions and intended actions