

Then Lord Strathcona goes on to say :

Personally I do not see that there is much difference in principle between the new scheme and that formerly in operation.

That was a very fair criticism of the contract. It is one which other hon. gentlemen have made and which I purpose making myself. In principle and essence there is no difference really between the agreement made with the North Atlantic Trading Company and the contracts which were made in the past with the individual booking agents, the only difference being that the Canadian government had one company carrying on the work instead of several hundred booking agents. Lord Strathcona, in this letter, says :

Personally I do not see much difference in principle between the new scheme and that formerly in operation, except that the former is to be confined to a few booking agents. I hope, however, that those excluded may not in consequence be made antagonistic to the interests of the Dominion.

I might as well read the concluding portion of the letter so that I may not have to refer to it again. It is this :

I need hardly point out that the new arrangement must be regarded as very confidential and must not be made public in any way.

An hon. MEMBER. Who says that ?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN. This is from Lord Strathcona to Mr. Sifton.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN. I intend to deal with this aspect of the question later on, but I wish to say here that, so far as I can gather from the records, Lord Strathcona was the only person, outside of the company itself, who urged on the department here, that the contract should be regarded as very confidential and must not be made public in any way. This is hardly in keeping with the statement made by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) on Tuesday last, that Lord Strathcona had nothing whatever to do with this contract and that it had been made, behind his back, between Messrs. Smart and Preston. To my mind that last portion of the High Commissioner's letter is a sufficient answer to that statement. Eventually a contract was completed and it was in the form of correspondence. It was in the form of a letter from the Trans-Atlantic Trading Company—as it was then called—to Mr. Preston, dated October 20, and the latter of Mr. Preston accepting the same. These two letters constitute the contract. No formal agreement or contract was ever executed either on the first occasion or on the occasion of the so-called second contract. Under this first contract, the company agreed as follows :

We will undertake to bring Canada to the attention of people residing in continental Euro-

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN.

pean countries, and in answer to inquiries furnish reliable information regarding the climatic conditions and resources of Canada, and where it is their intention to emigrate, point to Canada as a desirable field for settlement.

I must admit that these duties were not very onerous but they were considerably more so than the duties imposed on the booking agents under the old arrangement. The government were to spend five hundred pounds in printing suitable literature which they were to place at the disposal of the company. The company were to receive from the government upon all immigrants, coming to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, over twelve years of age, certain sums which were fixed upon a sliding scale. Each family coming into the country was to be possessed of \$100. The proposition was to apply only to agriculturists or those intending to settle upon agricultural land, and the contract was to extend over a period of five years but could be cancelled on three months' notice. My hon. friends, in discussing these three contracts, have all made the statement that every time there was a change, it was to the advantage of the company and the disadvantage of the government.

In 1902 a second arrangement was made. No formal contract was ever executed, but this arrangement was entirely a matter of correspondence and the terms of it are contained in an order in council passed and approved by His Excellency on May 31, 1902. The Minister of the Interior in his report to the council states in effect that two years before a tentative arrangement had been made with the North Atlantic Trading Company which was composed of certain leading continental steamship agents and had its headquarters in Amsterdam in the kingdom of Holland, whereby they undertook to represent the immigration interests of Canada in continental Europe. The minister further states that this company having done this work to the satisfaction of the Immigration Department and with much better results than were obtained from the plan previously followed, it is now proposed to enter into a definite agreement whereby the Department of the Interior will grant to the aforesaid North Atlantic Trading Company a bonus for each man, woman and child of the agriculture class. Here the only change is that the twelve-year age limit for children is abolished. It has been urged by some members of the committee, and emphasized in this chamber by some of the speakers supporting the amendment, that it was not in the interest of Canada, but solely in the interest of the company that the bonus should apply to children of every age. I wish to discuss that matter very briefly right here. I submit this as being a fair proposition: That it was in the interest of Canada to remove the age limit of twelve years. I say it would be a good investment for this coun-