SESSIONAL PAPER No. 95

On several occasions the French Government by the Department of the Interior entrusted with public security, has highly manifested its dislike about the Canadian agents' work in France.

On June 25, 1909, Mr. Clemenceau instructed the prefect to warn the French public of the dangers of emigration to Canada, 'a country where alone farm-servants hiring their services to land owners, and mechanics possessing sufficient means to set up for themselves, can settle under favourable conditions.' And that circular, including many items on the deficiency of roads and railways, 'that want and call for, sectionmen and labourers.' The difficulty to sell agricultural products, &c., is itself railway sectionmen and labourers.' The difficulty to sell agricultural products, &c., is itself railway sectionmen and labourers are the issuing of a circular of February 26, 1886, apparently directed against the agent which the government of Quebec was then sending to France.

On August 21, 1911, Mr. Briand, who had succeeded to Mr. Clemenceau, forwarded to the prefects, 'in virtue of his office' a notice which he begs them to insert, without mention of origin, (these words are underlined in the text) and as an ordinary news in the newspaper of the towns and districts where French emigrants are principally recruited, employees, industrial mechanics and farm labourers, for Canada. In that notice it is said—

(a) that, with a very few exceptions, the clerks, the young men of quality, the office employees, meet in Canada, but 'disappointments and failure.'

(b) that, outside of Montreal, if he is not familiar with the English language, and everywhere if he does not belong to the syndicates or 'unions' the foreign mechanics can hardly find work, that moreover the difference in tools almost imposes a new apprenticeship and that, on account of the mode of living the salaries are not as high as they seem at first, in short that 'the mechanics who have slight chances of success are those who are skilled or special labourers, knowing the English language.'

(c) that, seeing the insufficiency of transport accommodation and the difficulty of selling their crops, and also the scarcity of manual labour even the farmers are not always sure to succeed, 'They have the more luck,' says the circular, but yet they have to go to the north-west, and they must be vigourous, experienced, and possess a capital of at least ten thousand francs, and as much as possible, a family who saves them paid labour. They should have initiative, not fear a severe climate and work with perseverance and courage during ten or fifteen years. 'At that price,' adds the notice, 'they would have succeeded in France and suffered much less. And the minsiter concludes: 'The best French emigration to Canada would still be our directors of enterprises, engineers, &c., and our capital well employed and controlled by a French founded bank.'

A circular of which I have not the exact date, but which goes back to the Combes Ministry in 1905, reads thus:—

Mr. Prefect, my attention has been several times drawn to the increase of the rural population, specially in the Departments of the South and Savoie and that fact is attributed to increasing emigration of youths.

'Some duly authorized agencies have, in fact, extended their action upon nearly all the territory, and in order to recruit the greatest possible number of labourers intended for different countries of America they most often make an exaggerated or even false description of the advantages to be met in those remote parts. The sub-agents whom they employ do not confine themselves to verbal promises. They also issue hand bills and pamphlets, they even make use of irregular auxiliaries, that is of individuals who do not hold an authentic proxy of an emigration agency only authorized by the Government.