

MONTREAL, December 17, 1912.

Mr. W. D. SCOTT,

Superintendent of Immigration,
Ottawa.

SIR,—In conforming with your instructions, I have in the course of a trip to Europe last winter, studied on the spot the question of immigration from France and Belgium to Canada. I left on January 11, and returned on April 23, after having spent three weeks in Liverpool, Birmingham and London, one week in Belgium and eight weeks in France. My object in going first to England was to acquaint myself as much as possible with the processes of propaganda employed by the Canadian agents in that country, in order to judge whether, and to what extent, they could be applied in France and Belgium. My relatively short stop in Belgium is due to the fact that I did not observe in that country any of the difficulties that, in France, seem at first sight to hinder emigration to Canada, and moreover being obliged by sickness to come back by Havre, I could not as I had wished, return to Anvers, to make a complimentary sojourn, with your agent, Mr. de Coeli, of a few days in the Flanders and the official centre of Brussels.

In submitting to you now this report of my inquiry, I beg to assure you that uncontrollable circumstances did not permit me sooner to accomplish this duty, I also pray you to note that, leaving aside, of course, my personal opinion in the principle itself of encouragement to immigration I have, in this work, placed myself in the viewpoint of the Government, which, if I am not mistaken, is the opportunity to attract to Canada, by all legitimate means possible, the greatest number of corporally and mentally sane subjects, capable of adapting themselves to Canadian life.

It did not belong to me to reopen the question of the value of the Belgium and French settler in Canada, after the declarations made in different occasions by the Immigration officers.

Your predecessor, Mr. Smart, in his report of 1907, declares that 'the French and Belgian farmers are amongst the best that we can bring to Canada.'

Mr. J. Obed Smith, your present general agent in England, but then Commissioner of Immigration at Winnipeg, and in that capacity, entrusted with the direction and superintendence of immigrants in the western provinces, writes in 1907:—

'The great majority of French and Belgian immigrants are farmers. . . These settlers are very successful and thrifty.'

We read in a previous report of Mr. Smith:—

'The striking feature of the year is the arrival of a great number of French emigrants with their families. I am happy to report that we have been able to procure them employment with good wages. They willingly accept the work that is offered, specially from their countrymen, and they are anxious to learn and save the money required to acquire a farm for their own account. I am glad to say that anywhere in western Canada the French and Belgian are very successful. The energy and ingenuity which they apply to their work characterizes their farming operations.'

Mr. J. Bruce Walker, formerly general agent in England, who succeeded to Mr. Smith, at Winnipeg, writes in 1909:—

'The French and Belgian emigrants who came here last year were the best class, as they were nearly all farmers they accepted service on farms, or took lands for their own accounts.'