

calendar year the figures are, from the British Isles 49,782, and from other European countries 73,182. How, then, my friend could write into the speech from the throne this statement with respect to immigration I find a little difficult to understand:

There has been a substantial increase in the number of British immigrants as well as the number of immigrants of a suitable type from the continent of Europe.

Well, the figures show that while immigration from the British Isles has increased, it has increased much more rapidly from continental countries; that while we had 37,000 odd from the British Isles in 1926 and 39,000 odd from other European countries, last year the figures were 49,000 odd from the British Isles and 73,000 from other European countries. I leave the question to be dealt with by the government.

But I want to go a step further with respect to this question, because the government has a history in this regard, and I think it time this country realized just what that history is. I have already said that this government has prepared seven speeches from the throne; let us see what they have said on the question of immigration, and ask the people of the country to judge on the most important question that can engage public attention at this time, what is being done and what has been done. We will look first at the speech from the throne in 1922, and see the statement with reference to this question of immigration. It is as follows:

The stream of immigration to the Dominion was much interrupted and restricted during the war. Now that the blessing of peace is with us, a renewal of efforts to bring in new settlers must be made. My government are fully alive to the importance of this question and will use every reasonable endeavour to attract to our country people of the most desirable class, with particular regard to settlement on our undeveloped lands.

That was in 1922. A further statement was made in 1923, to this effect:

The matter of securing an increasing flow of desirable settlers to develop the large areas still available for cultivation in Canada has had the serious consideration of my advisers. Additional and general publicity campaigns have been launched in Great Britain and the United States, and, as opportunity offers, will be extended to other lands from which a suitable class of settlers may be attracted. In other particulars, the activities of the Department of Immigration and Colonization are being expanded.

In 1924 nothing was said on this subject, but in 1925 we again have some semblance of activity:

To aid in an increase of production, through the development of our vast natural resources,
[Mr. Bennett.]

every effort is being made to attract the right class of immigrants to Canada, and to secure their settlement in the undeveloped areas served by our great transportation systems. In due course steps will be taken to further colonization and settlement in other fertile regions such as those of the Peace River.

Then again in 1926 they had one more try out:

An agreement has been made between the government and the railroad companies providing a larger measure of co-operation in immigration activities in the British Isles and on the continent of Europe. An agreement entered into with the British government has already been instrumental in stimulating immigration from Great Britain.

While it is of importance to attract new settlers it is equally, if not more important, to assist those who are already established on the land by reducing the cost of agricultural production. To this end a measure will be introduced offering wide facilities for rural credits.

I have already read that part of the speech from the throne delivered in 1927 dealing with this question, and I gave the census figures for 1916 to 1921 and for 1921 to 1926; those figures have been placed on record, and they indicate that although we have sent a few settlers west, many of them have left the country; they entered at the front door and left by the back, and we have not even maintained our natural increase. Further than that, in no one year since 1921 have we brought into Canada half as many people as were brought here in 1913. Those are the facts and the figures.

Now, Sir, this question transcends party; it is larger than the lives of parties because it strikes at the very life of this Dominion. We must have settlers. We have in Canada facilities to take care of an additional population of from 15,000,000 to 17,000,000 people; we have 10,000,000 acres of untouched land within 20 miles of the railways; we have the Peace River area and other portions of the country which are lying idle while the government is expressing pious hopes as to what will happen. I say the time has come when action must be taken.

It cannot be done in any small way; it cannot be accomplished in any niggardly way, but it must be done in a large way. It involves the expenditures of vast sums of money and, more than that, it involves a large and comprehensive policy of settlement. I suggest to the Prime Minister that the committee on agriculture and colonization or a special committee of this House, one or the other—and I would prefer the latter—should meet to hear the evidence of the presidents of our great railways, of the minister, the deputy minister and the officials of the de-