

often a subject of great astonishment to me that, while, even in most distant countries of Europe, we provide facilities for immigration to this country, and spend fabulous sums every year in inducing immigrants to come and in taking care of them from the time they leave until they are actually settled on the best lands of the west, yet, the young men of our own country, people the most eminently eligible, people who, by birthright should have the first selection of the best lands in these distant provinces, are offered no facilities whatever to settle on these lands. I believe that we should carry on with a great deal more earnestness the work of repatriation, not only among the people who, to our great regret, have left the province of Quebec in such a large numbers and have gone to the New England States, but amongst all those who are suitable as settlers in the Northwest.

I have had some doubt, I confess, of the desirability of this change, not because any doubt presents itself directly to my own mind, as to the advisability of abolishing the system of bonuses, but because a number of our friends, who are settled in the Northwest, including some who are in this House and even some who sit on this side of the House, seem to cling to the opinion that we should hurry as much as possible the settlement of that great western part of our commonwealth. I say this has created some doubt in my own mind. It is stated that those who have gone there as settlers have succeeded well. I am glad to hear it. But I am also somewhat surprised, I must say; for our system has so lacked the necessary quality of selection that we might have expected to hear a good deal of complaint from that quarter. But we have gone far enough. The time has come for a change. If these people who have settled in the Northwest are suitable even contrary to the opinion often expressed by the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver), they are the best immigration agents we can have. They will write home to those whom they have left behind—and we can rely implicitly upon them to bring out only the mots suitable immigrants—I would say to my hon. friend the Minister of the Interior, let us have a little confidence in our country. Nations such as ours are not built up in a day. What is fifty years, or seventy years, in the life of a nation? Better by far that we should go slowly, that we should make selection of those who are going to help us to build up this commonwealth, that we should be most prudent, even proud and distant, in the selection of these settlers, than that we should fill up this country with people who, at some future day, may become a danger to our commonwealth.

Under these circumstances, it seems to me that we should change our policy. That we
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should make known our country—yes. That we should spend liberally in order to develop the transportation system of our country—yes. We should take part in exhibitions; we should, for instance, in France and Belgium, have offices where information is given. There is no prohibition as to that. We have spent thousands and thousands of dollars in getting articles published in newspapers to be diffused through the eastern part of Europe. Why should we not do something in order to make known to nearer and more sympathetic countries the value of Canada as a place of settlement, and not continue giving so much a head to in most cases, irresponsible parties, in order to carry on this system. I say the time has come to make a change. I do not wish to cast any aspersion on those employed at present in the immigration propaganda. Some of them have undoubtedly some good qualities, but what is the reason the government is so loathe to accomplish this, to my mind, most urgent reform? Many of these people have been placed in their position because they are political hangers on. Some of them are related to members of parliament or ministers, and some are there doing little less than draw their salaries. Open the public accounts, and you will find that we spent in the United States last year over \$100,000 on our immigration agencies there. What on earth is the use of these? They are absolutely useless. There is not a man who knows anything of the immigration of Americans into our Northwest Territories who will not tell you that not one of them has been induced to come in by an immigration agent. If they have come, it is because of the quality of the land in the Northwest. They have found it in their interests to sell out at a profit in their own country and to settle on the virgin soil of the Canadian prairie and thus better their position. Abolish that item of expenditure, withdraw these agents from the United States, and you will not see a diminution of one immigrant. They will continue to come in just as they have done in the past. Under all these circumstances, it seems to me this motion commends itself to the approval of the House; and if I was not situated as I am, I would vote to support it.

Hon. SYDNEY FISHER (Minister of Agriculture). I do not wish to take any particular part in this discussion on the subject of immigration. I think that the results of the policy of this government speak for themselves, and there is not much necessity for the friends of the administration to defend its course and policy. My own suspicion is that the reason hon. gentlemen opposite attack us on this point is that they are envious of the results of our policy as compared with their own in days gone by, and they now wish they had taken the same course and had been able to show similar results. But I wish to say a word with regard to the Liège exhibition, concerning