

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. We have not given any. These people have removed themselves. They have asked for no assistance. They are not the class of people to whom assistance would be of any moment, such as it is to people like the Doukhobors and Galicians. When I say that no assistance was given them, I mean no assistance in the shape of money payments. But the staff, the accommodation and the immigration shed have been at their disposal, and they make use of them. All these people reported at the Immigration Office at Winnipeg, and most of them received assistance in the way of direction and information. They made use of the services of the officers of the department particularly in the location of land. The only direct money payment that has been made in connection with the Doukhobors, has been the payment of one pound sterling per head to their committee, which they themselves created by appointment, they naming some of the members and I naming some of the members. That money was only used, practically, for the purpose of furnishing subsistence for a portion of the Doukhobors who were comparatively destitute. They were not all in that condition, because many of them were in fairly good circumstances. But the money was practically used for the purpose of furnishing subsistence during the two or three months that intervened before they could get on the land. While I do not suppose there will be any special objection to offering a bonus, or a payment of \$5 per head in the way of assistance to Canadians, the average Canadian would not regard it as being of any value whatever. I think he would rather laugh at it if we were to offer a Canadian farmer's son \$5 to go to the North-west. As to the Doukhobors and Galicians they are agriculturists; there are no labouring people amongst them in the ordinary sense of the word. This is a matter in regard to which our agents had definite instructions that none but people who are agriculturists are to be sent to Canada under the auspices of the department.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Some of these people are not engaged in agriculture, but are engaged in the city.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I do not think so more than this: I gave most positive instructions when the Doukhobors went up—of course they were in the country and we could not lock them up or control them absolutely—that while occupying the Government buildings, they were not to be permitted to compete in the labour market with labouring men, that they were not to be permitted to go out and do any work for wages while they were there. I supposed that my instructions had been carried out, and substantially they were. But the position of having several hundred men in a building in the city, having nothing to

do, proved rather a difficult one, and some of them got out and engaged in cutting wood and work of that sort. As soon as I heard of it, I gave peremptory orders to put a stop to it. That is one of those things that is likely to happen in any large department where there are a great many men to be dealt with.

Mr. MONTAGUE. When I was in Winnipeg, only a short time ago, I heard it generally complained of that these people were competing in the labour market in Winnipeg and doing work for about one-half of the remuneration it would be done for by local people.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. That just happened in the way I spoke of. There was a complaint about it at once. I got a letter from the Trades and Labour Council in Winnipeg in regard to it, and I answered the letter explaining the situation. I do not think that the people who really knew the circumstances complained that any substantial amount of work had been done because they had done nothing at all except what I have mentioned. It was done contrary to my orders, and as soon as I heard that my orders had not been fully carried out, I telegraphed to the Commissioner at Winnipeg and gave him very strict instructions not to permit these men to work for wages.

Mr. DAVIN. Could the hon. gentleman say what is the character of the immigration that has been coming in since January to the present time?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I cannot give the figures now.

Mr. DAVIN. I would like to ask the hon. Minister what about the statement that was made to me by a thoroughly reliable person to the effect that Mr. McCreary had said that British immigration is falling off, so much so, that it may almost be described as having stopped.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I do not believe that Mr. McCreary ever made such a statement. I do not desire to throw any doubt upon the hon. gentleman's statement, but I think he has been misinformed. I have been told, time and again, and letters have been written to me about statements Mr. McCreary was alleged to have made and things he was said to have done, and it has been found, in nearly every case, that he has not said or done these things. The commissioner is a man who is extremely busy. He is meeting all kinds of people at all hours of the day and night and he is asked all kinds of questions. It would be very easy to misconstrue some of the answers that he might make. He might casually say, on a railway platform, to some one that British immigration is falling off, without in the least intending to convey the idea that in a general way British immigra-