

SECOND  
FIRST REPORT

OF THE

STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION.

The Standing Committee on Immigration and Colonization, beg leave to report that, since their appointment, the question of the extent and limitation of their duties, under the Order of the House, and the provisions of the "British America Act," were found to be subjects of such doubtful nature, as can only be decided by the decision of Parliament.

The Order of the House empowers the Committee to "examine and inquire into all such matters and things as may be referred to them by the House, and to report, from time to time, their observations and opinions thereon; with power to send for persons, papers, and records."

The British America Act, clause 95, in relation to the matter of Immigration, provides that:—"In each Province the Legislature may make laws in relation to agriculture in the Province, and to immigration into the Province; and it is hereby declared that the Parliament of Canada may, from time to time, make laws in relation to agriculture in all or any of the Provinces, and to immigration into all or any of Provinces; and any law of the Legislature of a Province, relative to agriculture or immigration, shall have effect in and for the Province, as long and as far, only, as it is not repugnant to any act of the Parliament of Canada."

The Committee beg to observe, in the first place, that the Order of the House expressly includes the subject of Colonization as well as Immigration, as being within the functions of this Committee. But it does not seem possible for this Committee to take up the subject of Colonization, as part of their duties, since the "British America Act," clause 92, sub-section 5, confers on the Local Legislatures of each Province, as an exclusive power, "the management and sale of the public lands belonging to the Province, and of the timber and wood thereon." And clause 109 of the same Act, in relation to mines and mineral lands, further provides:—

"All lands, mines, minerals and royalties belonging to the several Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, at the Union, and all sums then due or payable for such lands, mines, minerals or royalties, shall belong to the several Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, in which the same are situate or arise, subject to any trusts existing in respect thereof, and to any interest other than that of the Province in the same."

These clauses seem to place every interest in connection with the public lands and their settlement beyond the purview of this Committee, and to limit their inquiries and supervision of immigration matters simply to the sanitary arrangements for the reception of immigrants, the management of the existing agencies, and the transit of immigrants within the Dominion.

In order to understand more clearly the views of the Local and General Governments on this important preliminary point, the Committee authorized the following circular to be