

Mr. MONK. But there are no Scandinavians homesteaders.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. If my hon. friend will turn to page XII, he will find in the list of homestead entries: Swedo-Norwegians, 229; Danes, 40. These seem to be all the entries of Scandinavians. But my hon. friend will understand that the numbers given at page 4 are of families, not of individuals.

Mr. MONK. But making allowance for all that, the hon. minister will see that the figures do not correspond at all. It would be better, in future reports, to put the column together so that we can see what the actual results are.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I understood my hon. friend (Mr. Monk) to ask what the explanation was, and I am endeavouring to give it to him. I am not aware of the reason why the officials who compiled the table made a change this year. It was not called to my attention. It is quite impossible, as my hon. friend is aware, that I should personally supervise every table prepared by the officers of the department. I am giving the explanation of the facts from which he will see that there is no real discrepancy, that the homesteads do in fact correspond with the number of people reported to have come.

My hon. friend called attention to certain statements with regard to a form of disease which has been considerably spoken of in connection with the medical inspection of immigrants—trachoma. The hon. gentleman spoke at some length on the subject, and I understood him to express the opinion that this disease was incurable. I do not profess to be able to give an opinion upon this purely medical question, but I may say that the medical inspector of our department advises the department that this is not an incurable disease; and also that the matter having been referred to the director general of public health, an officer of the Department of Agriculture, he gives a similar opinion. These officers tell us that trachoma can be rapidly and somewhat easily cured under proper conditions. Then, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Monk) called attention to the fact that a gentleman named Faber was reported in one of the newspaper as a physician in charge of the work of inspecting immigrants and it was said he had been subject to a penalty—found to be unlicensed or something of that kind. All I have to say is that he is not an officer of my department. He may be employed by one of the steamship companies but he is not employed by us.

Mr. MONK. I did not pretend that he was employed by the department; but I would ask the hon. minister how it comes that this officer is charged with the care of patients afflicted with trachoma, who arrive in Quebec?

Hon. Mr. SIFTON.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. We have no record on that subject. It may be that he is acting on behalf of one of the steamship companies.

Mr. CLARKE. Who pays the cost of the maintenance of these sick immigrants?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. It is the duty of the steamship companies to provide medical treatment for them, and it is the duty of our officers to see that they are cured of the disease before they are permitted to become permanent residents of Canada.

Mr. CLARKE. And are these sick immigrants the guests of the steamship companies during the time they are being attended by Canadian medical officers?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. The medical officers are officers of the steamship companies, and the immigrants are maintained at the charge of the steamship companies.

Mr. CLARKE. There is no charge upon the Canadian people except the charge of our medical officers?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. That is all.

Mr. FOWLER. How many of the Barr colonists were there altogether, men, women and children?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I will give the hon. gentleman that information a little later on. I remember that the number of homestead entries made by the Barr colonists was 1,821.

Mr. FOWLER. The hon. gentleman can give me the information as to the number of colonists later on to-night?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I cannot give the total number now. I desire to say a word or two with regard to some matters that have been brought to the attention of the committee and in respect to which a word or two may not be amiss. In the first place, so far as that phase of the immigration question is concerned to which my attention has been drawn by my hon. friend from Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux) and the hon. member for St. Mary's division (Hon. Mr. Tarte), I may say that we have, at the present time, for the purpose of conducting the repatriation of French Canadians, three agents who are clergymen of the Roman Catholic Church, and I believe, all French Canadians, and we have, in addition, a lay agent.

Mr. MONET. Where are these agents?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. My hon. friend from Labelle referred to the fact that these agents were stationed in the province of Quebec, and suggested that it would be better if they were stationed in