

tunities for employment in Canada they have expected, have been tempted to go to the United States to seek employment. But men who have studied conditions claim there is a fairly even balance between the two countries. For example, Premier Dunning, of Saskatchewan, in a conference regarding immigration matters which was held in Ottawa last fall, made the statement that as between the numbers of people going back and forth, in prairie schooners as they term it across the line, it was difficult to say which numbers were the more considerable.

My right hon. friend in one of his public speeches has pointed out that there is a drift from the country to the cities; that it is an inevitable thing, a natural phenomenon in all countries, likely to continue and not attributable to fiscal or other policies of a government. What my right hon. friend regards as inevitable has been happening here. Some of our people living in Canada, particularly those living adjacent to the border, have drifted over to American cities during a period of great prosperity because wages there were high and there was plenty of employment along construction lines; but those people are beginning to come back to Canada in considerable numbers, and I think we shall find, as this year goes on and is succeeded by other years, we shall soon again have the old story of reviving prosperity with increased immigration as we have had it in former years. Let me cite the figures for the last nine months. From April to December of 1923, that is to say for nine months of last year, there were 124,680 immigrants who came to this country as against 60,247 the year previous, or an increase of 107 per cent.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What were the two years?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am giving the figures for the nine months from April to December 1923 as against the same months of 1922.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Let my hon. friend give the figures for 1921.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I have already told my hon. friend that he stopped all the immigration machinery during the period that he was in office.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I know that the Prime Minister said that, but it is entirely wrong; not a word of it is correct. The immigration in 1921 exceeded 148,000.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I hold to the facts that I have already mentioned. Another

statement which my right hon. friend is fond of making is that we have been searching the highways and byways, the lanes and the alleys, to bring the scourings of Europe over to this country. I think I have the right hon. gentleman's exact words somewhere here. His statement has been that we have been—scouring the cities and back lanes of Europe to bring people to this country.

My hon. friend has been making that statement in different parts of the country. He knows that it is not correct. He knows that for the most part the people who have been coming to this country have been coming from the British Isles. During the nine months from April to December, 1923, 64,127 persons came from the British Isles as against 28,525 in the corresponding nine months of the year 1922, or an increase during the last year of 125 per cent over the previous year in the immigration to this country of people of British stock. That is the answer I make to my hon. friend in his efforts to have the country believe that the government is bringing in larger numbers from other countries than from Great Britain.

May I refer for a moment to what my hon. friend said in reference to a conversation which I had with one hon. member of the House, the member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar), and also with Premier Dunning of Saskatchewan. My hon. friend seemed to think that it was an extraordinary thing that one who has the responsibilities of having to do with the shaping of policy in the country should seek to get information from a member of parliament or from the premier of a provincial government. May I say to the hon. gentleman that I have been getting information from as many sources as I possibly can. I asked Premier Dunning to come to Ottawa because while I had had the privilege of having a talk with the Premier of Manitoba, the Premier of Alberta and the Premier of British Columbia, I had had no opportunity of having a similar conversation with him, and knowing the important position he holds in Saskatchewan, knowing his grasp of western affairs, knowing his great ability and the public confidence he enjoys, I naturally was anxious to have a discussion with him before parliament met this session, in order to confirm certain views I had formed with regard to important matters of public policy. In the same way I asked the member for Marquette, not being sure whether he would be in the House at the opening of the session, whether he could spare the time to come to Ottawa for the purpose of a