

Agriculture and Colonization.

Mr. Bedard in France and Belgium. A number of temporary agents, practical North-west farmers, have gone over for this season. Of these, there are four in England, four in Ireland, two in Scotland, two in Norway and Sweden, one in Denmark and one in Iceland. Then Mr. Ritchie is delivering lectures in England and Scotland, and besides these we have a number of lecturers, who are employed from time to time by the High Commissioner. They are supplied with carefully selected and scientifically prepared Canadian views with which to illustrate the lectures. Many such lectures are delivered free of expense, chiefly by clergymen who have visited this country and have been impressed with its advantages.

By Mr. McGregor :

Q. What facilities have you for keeping track of those who come into this country? The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, the last time he was before this committee on immigration business, stated that 834,000 people came here in ten years, but when the census came down we were greatly disappointed at the figures. Are you keeping track of those coming in?—A. No. If you look at the annual report, you will find that one of the first conclusions I arrived at when the immigration business was handed over to the Interior Department—a conclusion which, I may say the Government concurred in—was that to attempt to keep track of the people going to and fro in such a country as ours, with the enormous boundary line we have, would be useless, or at best misleading.

Q. Every time Mr. Lowe came before the committee we were met with the statement that so many were coming in. We ought to be encouraged in a matter of this kind?—A. Well, I took the ground, in my report to the Minister of the Interior, that the decennial census is the only true indication of the number of people in Canada. To try to keep track of those coming in and those going out would, to my mind, be practically like trying to count the sands of the sea. With great hesitation I ventured in this matter to differ from Mr. Lowe, who has had a long and valuable experience; but holding the views I did, I felt bound conscientiously to say so to the Government.

There is one other question which was passed upon by the Transportation conference to which I have alluded, in addition to a resolution about the desirability of exchanging proofs of pamphlets and using illustrations in common, by which a considerable saving in money and time will be effected, and this had relation to a topic to which I made some reference in my evidence before this committee last year. The resolution adopted at the conference speaks for itself:—

“That it is desirable that an experiment be tried which has met with considerable success in the settlement of other colonies, namely, the establishment of a colonization Bureau in Europe representing the Canadian Government and the steamship and railway companies for the furnishing of transportation in whole or part to a specified number (300 suggested for 1893) of desirable settlers and their families, the conditions of selection after personal inspection by the Bureau being:—

“That they shall be married and have families,

“That they shall have been engaged in agricultural pursuits, at least three years prior to the selection,

“That they shall be of good temperate and industrious habits,

“That they shall be in good health,

“That the cost of transportation shall be borne one-half by the transportation companies and one-half by the Canadian Government,

“That the same plan be adopted in connection with a specified number (500 suggested for 1893) of unmarried female domestic servants, between the ages of 18 and 30 years. The Canadian Government to take care of these servants on arrival in Manitoba until placed in suitable service.”

This resolution, as you may suppose from my evidence last year, has my personal sympathy. It has not yet been acted upon by the Government, but Mr. Daly is in communication with the High Commissioner with the object of ascertaining his views on the subject.