

be of more value. I would suggest that consideration be given to a hearing aid of the antique type such as the ancient earhorn which would be in keeping, sir, with the uniform which you and other officials of this house wear, reminiscent of a few centuries ago. This aura of dignity and antiquity would thereby be enhanced when we hoisted the earhorns in this corner of the house.

It has been a custom for new members to describe briefly their constituencies. While I doubt if that privilege is accorded to older members, nevertheless I should like to impose upon the generosity of the house to describe my constituency from one particular angle, namely, the racial background. The honour of being the first agricultural settlement in Manitoba does not go to the constituency of Lisgar. The first agricultural settlers in that province were the Selkirk settlers of 1812; but that settlement was not an agricultural success by reason of the fact that, first of all, the settlers were not trained agriculturists; in addition, there were many other hazards which I need not mention at the moment.

The settlement did not prosper as an agricultural settlement until comparatively recently. In fact, it did not grow to any extent until in the sixties when, by reason of the railroads which had moved westward through Chicago, transportation was diverted from the water routes which had been in use earlier, to the railroads of the United States. To reach them, the trails leading south of the international boundary and beyond were used. Along that trail a new settlement grew up.

Early in the seventies small settlements and people from Ontario chiefly, grew up along the Assiniboine and Boyne rivers in Manitoba; so that it was not until 1874 when the first settlements in Lisgar constituency took place. Those settlers were mostly from Ontario and they followed the wooded slopes of that area, the reason being that the Ontario settler had been trained to work in the woods and understood clearing land and converting it to the use of grains.

In 1873, however, the government of the day entered into a treaty with a certain sect of people in the kingdom of Russia. These people were known as Mennonites and were of the Dutch race. For centuries they had migrated, as many sects had done in Europe, and eventually found themselves in Russia as the guests of Queen Catherine, who wished them to be an example to the Russian peasants in the way of agriculture.

Those settlements had been in Russia for approximately a century when delegates came to Canada to try to arrange for a settlement

[Mr. Winkler.]

in Manitoba. An order in council was passed permitting them to come, under certain conditions. They were granted freedom of religion and exemption from military service; and strangely, the order in council was kept secret. I say "strangely", but possibly it was not so strange, because the order in council permitted them to teach in their own schools in the way they saw fit.

However, in 1875 the Mennonites arrived and settled on the plains of Manitoba. They formed an area approximately forty miles long by twenty miles wide; and suddenly that portion of Manitoba bloomed like a garden. Never before had such an area in Canada been seen growing in wheat. It was a wonderful sight to those who saw it, and the news spread to eastern Canada.

In the following four years, and prior to 1880, practically all the arable portion of southern Manitoba was homesteaded, principally by settlers from Ontario. The point I should like to make is that at that time there was no experimental farm system, at least none engaged in experiments in dry farming. The Mennonites who came from Russia had learned how to carry on that type of farming and were quite experienced in it when they arrived in Manitoba; therefore their colony was a success from the beginning. When the Mennonites came to treat for settlement in Manitoba, did they ask about housing? No, they did not; they were quite capable of pioneering. They ploughed up the sods and stacked them one on top of the other, packed them firmly together, packed them around window and door frames, from the bush brought saplings which they tied together at the peak, and then thatched the roof. Sod houses last for only a few years, but for a short time they are warm and dry. In due course the sod houses were replaced by log houses, which lasted for many years; in fact, many are still standing. Last year I believe the last thatched roof in that district disappeared; they last for a long time.

That leads me to refer to the Ukrainian colony in Manitoba. Any Manitoban over thirty years of age recalls the Ukrainian immigration into that province. They were dumped in large numbers almost anywhere in Manitoba, and settled in the outlying districts. We recall those picturesque little huts built by twining saplings together and then plastering them with clay. Of course they had thatched roofs. Many of those houses lasted for twenty years; they were dry and serviceable.

This brings me to another migration which not only affected my constituency in Mani-