

## A DEPLORABLE ACT OF STUPIDITY.

Deplorably damaging to the credit of Canada is the announced decision of the Dominion Government that persons who have been less than three years in the country who now find themselves unable to get work and earn the money necessary for their support are to be deported to the country from which they came. This decision, it is announced, the Government has arrived at, on account of the prevalence of unemployment—a condition which is reported to be assuming serious proportions, especially in Ontario and Quebec. Thus the Dominion Government, instead of showing itself competent to grapple with this condition, weakly takes a course which is, in effect, a proclamation of despair to the world at large.

It is thus officially proclaimed to the world at large from the capital of Canada by the Government of Canada that times are so hard in Canada that the Government finds it necessary now to repudiate the assurances hitherto given in the immigration work of the Government, that Canada was the land of hope and opportunity to the industrious, thrifty home-seekers of the overcrowded old world lands.

That campaign for immigration has been carried on at large expense. The people whom the Government is now going to deport were induced to come to Canada by representations that by so doing they would better their condition. They were admitted to the country by Government officials as being fit and desirable immigrants. Now they are to be sent back by the Government to where they came from. Could anything be more damaging to Canada? Could anything be more to the desire of the countries which are Canada's rivals than that the Government of Canada should thus handicap this country? Could anything conduce more to sending immigrants to the United States or Australia or to other countries seeking settlers to develop their natural resources in preference to Canada?

The seriousness of this matter may well be gauged by the comment of the most influential and distinctively British financial and business journal, the London Economist, which outranks any other, and whose utterances are recognized as authoritative by bankers the world over. In a leading article under the heading, "The Distress in Canada," the Economist says:

"City men and investors generally, to say nothing of exporters, are so deeply interested in Canada that they naturally watch very closely all indications that are forthcoming as to the width and depth of the present depression. To judge from the latest telegrams, the wheat crop, which is likely to be superlatively good in the United States, will only be a moderate one in Canada, as the effects of drought have been severely felt in large districts of the West. But the size and value of the crops are still problematical. The most definite sign of a setback is the official pessimism as exhibited in the extraordinary action taken by the Canadian Government at the end of last week.

"From telegrams sent by the Ottawa correspondent of the Yorkshire Post and the Toronto correspondent of The Times, it appears that unemployed persons in Canadian cities who have been in Canada less than three years, and have become a charge on the public funds, are to be deported at the expense of the shipping and railway companies which brought them into Canada, although it is notorious that the Canadian Government was largely responsible for attracting them. Now, it is often stated in the Dominion that unemployment is a practically unknown problem; but as the Yorkshire Post observes in a well-informed and well-argued article, if unemployment did not exist in a rather acute form the Canadian Government would hardly take the drastic step of dealing with it by the summary process of deportation. The Canadian Government's decision is likely to remove a large number of immigrants from Toronto, Winnipeg, and other cities; and as some of these may probably have left Europe for political reasons, it is not surprising to hear that petitions and demonstrations are being got up to secure exemption from this arbitrary decree. The announcement of the Government's decision is said to have been made by Mr. Scott, the Superintendent of Immigration, to a deputation of Bulgarians and Bohemians. Work for the unemployed in towns is also to be provided on farms, but this presumably will only apply to persons who have the status of more than three years in Canada."

This damaging blow to the credit and the development of Canada is not the only one which the present Dominion Government has given, by reason of its incapacity and extreme partizanship. The report of Messrs. Cutler and Lynch-Staunton, for ex-

ample—a piece of outrageous partisanship in disregard of the country's credit and welfare—did grave injury to Canada. That report is now abandoned by the political party whose short-sighted purpose it was designed to serve, but the evil that it did lives after it, and helps to make all the greater the evil which this latest piece of blundering and incompetency will be the cause of.

Lacking in the resourcefulness, initiative, determination, foresight—in a word, the brains—needed to cope masterfully and successfully with the present situation, the Government, instead of setting itself to devise ways and means of dealing with the problem of unemployment, stupidly resorts to this policy of deportation, thereby repudiating the promises and inducements by which these people were drawn to Canada. Thus the good name of Canada is blackened before all the world, and our country is proclaimed to be stagnating in hard times—though the expenditure of our Minister of War this year totals up some \$15,000,000. If a little of the resourceful inventiveness of Col. the Hon. Sam Hughes, to say nothing of any of the other Ministers, in expending public money had been devoted to dealing with this problem of unemployment, surely a way could have been found of handling it without thus injuring the country.

It looks as if history were going to repeat itself. A young country like ours, still in the beginnings of its development, must have immigration. If immigration ceases, the country becomes stagnant as this country was in the years preceding the change of Government in 1896. And just as it then required organizing brains of the first quality to deal with the situation and turn stagnation into progress, so in like manner, according to present indications, a future Minister of the Interior with organizing brains of the first quality will be needed to grapple effectively with conditions similarly detrimental, created by the blundering and incapacity of the present Government.