

MORE ABOUT IMMIGRATION.

Mr. Cookshutt Returns to the Attack, but is Routed.

AN INDISCREET LETTER.

Immigration Agent's Offer to Supply Mechanics.

Meaning of Mr. Cookshutt's Com- munication Interpreted by Hon. Frank Oliver as Proposal to Empty Crowded Tenements of Europe Into Canada.

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Ottawa, Jan. 15.—The immigration policy of the Government was again under discussion in the House to-day, Mr. Cookshutt submitting a motion urging retrenchment. Mr. Oliver ably defended the policy of the Interior Department, and gave some striking illustrations of its success. Replying to the assertions that the Government were encouraging the importation of skilled mechanics, the Minister quoted an advertisement from an English newspaper which was signed by the London representative of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and which stated that there was a demand in Canada for skilled workers in all trades.

Mr. Porter's bill to amend the inspection and sales act was read a first time. Its intention is to make the laws of the Dominion and of the Province of Ontario uniform. The difference between them at present makes it difficult to enforce whichever law an information may be laid under.

To Keep Out Deadly Weapons.

In introducing his bill to amend the immigration act, Mr. Lewis explained that it was aimed at preventing foreigners bringing in concealed weapons, and giving authority to the proper officials to deport, if deemed necessary, the persons attempting to bring them in. Mr. Lewis read a number of newspaper reports showing the prevalence of the use of dangerous weapons by foreigners in various parts of the country in support of his plea that some measure such as he proposed should be adopted. The bill was read a first time.

Sir Frederick Borden, replying to Mr. Macdonell, said the Board of Officers appointed by the Minister of Militia to inquire into the pay and other questions concerning officers and men of the permanent corps had not yet reported, but he expected they would do so before the close of the financial year.

Mr. Oliver, replying to Mr. Lavergne of Montmagny, gave the details of the bonuses paid on immigrants, and stated that the total paid since 1900 was \$690,000. To Mr. Smith (Nanaimo) he said complaints had been made to the Government concerning the treatment of immigrants for Canada. The Government medical inspectors examined the ships as well as the immigrants, but not the food supplies, that being under the control of the Imperial Board of Trade.

Mr. Cookshutt on Immigration.

Mr. Cookshutt moved "that in consideration of the great congestion that at present prevails in the labor market in many of the industrial centres throughout the country it is highly expedient that assisted immigration, excepting only the agricultural and domestic servant classes, should immediately cease, and that no further bonuses shall be paid to individual agents or companies for sending or bringing in such immigrants; further, that the time has come for the strict enforcement of the law that requires that only the financially, morally and physically fit shall be allowed to enter this Dominion as settlers."

Speaking to this, he took exception to some remarks in a speech made in the House by Hon. Frank Oliver December 17, and in particular to the Minister's reference to a letter forwarded to his department with an enclosure from one of Mr. Cookshutt's constituents. The Minister's allegation, based upon these documents, that Mr. Cookshutt had proposed

to empty the tenements of Europe into the city of Brantford, could not, he argued, fairly be made on either the letter or the enclosure. He charged that officials of the Department of the Interior, contrary to the impression sought to be conveyed by the Minister, had assisted in bringing skilled mechanics to Canada, in proof of which argument he read a letter from an agent of the department in Europe, dated in January last. In effect this letter, addressed to the member for Brantford under the erroneous impression that he was President of the Manufacturers' Association, said that the Government agents, of whom a list was enclosed, had many inquiries from skilled mechanics, and if the Secretary of the association would supply the Government officers with details of their requirements in this regard they would be able to direct the mechanics to whom to apply. He charged the Department of the Interior with circulating literature which gave a false impression of the conditions in Canada. Glowing pictures, he said, were held up to the people of the old country, which could not be realized once in a thousand times. It was high time that the Minister of the Interior should set about a policy of retrenchment.

Hon. Frank Oliver.

Mr. Oliver thanked Mr. Cookshutt for having placed the views of the Opposition in regard to immigration so clearly before the House and the country. The Government were content to leave the country to judge between the two policies. Mr. Oliver again read the letter sent by Mr. Cookshutt in May, 1905; asking the department to co-operate with the Brantford employment and information bureau in obtaining immigrants, and emphasized the inconsistency of his position then and now. In 1905 Mr. Cookshutt was at one with the Government in that he wanted immigrants, but there was this difference, that Mr. Cookshutt desired to empty the overcrowded tenements of Europe, whereas the policy of the Government, then as now, was to settle the lands in the Northwest. Dealing with the letter read by Mr. Cookshutt, with reference to the emigration of skilled mechanics, Mr. Oliver asked for the name of the writer.

Mr. Cookshutt said the writer was John McLennan, Government immigration agent at Aberdeen, Scotland.

Mr. Oliver said the letter was certainly indiscreet, but it did not warrant the interpretation which Mr. Cookshutt had put upon it, that it was part of the Government's policy to encourage the immigration of skilled mechanics. Turning to the general question, he pointed out that in supporting a slow policy Mr. Cookshutt was upholding the traditions of the last Conservative Government. Under that regime not only was immigration from the old country infinitesimal, but there was an exodus of 30,000 native-born Canadians to the United States every year.

Results of Energetic Policy.

The exodus from Canada to the United States had not only been checked, but to-day there was a return to the Canadian Northwest that was one of the remarkable events of modern times. This success of the policy of the Government was not only filling up the Northwest with a splendid population, and consequently increasing the land development and wealth of the western country, but was furnishing a demand upon eastern manufacturers which could not be kept up with. This year there had, as a result of the Government's policy, been an immigration of 300,000. Lately, in response to request, attention had been paid to eastern Canada, and with excellent results. And of what nationality were the majority of the immigrants brought into eastern Canada this year, the people whom the hon. gentleman called upon his friends to scorn and exclude? They were people who stood at the head of civilization; they were English. The member for Brantford had created an impression, which would go throughout Britain and elsewhere, that English people were not wanted, and he was welcome to any kudos that came to him as a result of his efforts.

Responsibility For Undesirables.

He explained carefully the steps taken by the Government to secure the best class of immigrants, and defied the hon. gentleman to show that anything had been done by the Government to bring in a class of people who carry knives. The Government were not responsible for the conditions whereby a number of recent arrivals were out of employment. There were certain parties, he continued, who must accept responsibility for still attempting to bring out classes of immigrants for whom just now there was little work. In this connection he read an advertisement published in The British Emigrant and Colonial News and other English publications so late as December 13, 1907. This set forth that the manufacturers of eastern Canada were crying out for skilled workers in all trades, a number of which were specified. Girls also were wanted, according to the ad-

vertisement, which promised high wages, assisted passages to this country, and would up, "Apply, with references, to Lewis Leopold, official labor representative Canadian Manufacturers' Association, 15 Strand, London, W.C."

Mr. R. L. Borden.

Mr. Borden found that times had changed. The Government, who now declared they were not responsible for the conditions under which immigrants were receiving aid from charitable institutions, notably in Toronto, used to claim, in more prosperous times, that they were wholly responsible for the financial conditions. The letter read by Mr. Cookshutt, Mr. Borden thought, showed the Government had two policies on immigration, a secret one and a public one. Thus, while the Minister of the Interior was denouncing the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, his agents in Europe were conducting a propaganda to flood this country with skilled mechanics. The Government's policy of retaining immigrants in the country was not so successful as the Minister of the Interior tried to make out. During last year emigration from Canada to the United States was within a few hundred of 20,000. The Opposition leader detailed at some length the methods of dealing with immigrants arriving in the United States, including the imposition of a head tax. He was not prepared to say that the time had arrived when immigrants into Canada should pay a head tax, but he did believe the time had arrived when Canada should cease paying bonuses on immigrants. This country and its opportunities, which were just as good as those of the United States, would attract them. Attention should henceforth be directed to the quality rather than the quantity.

Mr. Alex. Johnston.

Mr. Johnston of Cape Breton took Mr. Cookshutt to task for not making the Minister of the Interior immediately acquainted with the letter from the agent of his department referred to. His neglect to do so displayed him in the light of a politician rather than a friend of the skilled workmen of Canada. He moved an amendment approving the policy of the Department of the Interior in confining its immigration operations to the encouragement of the coming to Canada of farmers, farm laborers and female domestic servants.

Mr. Uriah Wilson rose to continue the discussion, but it being 6 o'clock, the House adjourned.