

BARON VON AMORENGEN

An interesting sidelight on the appointment of Baron Von Amorengen, a naturalized German, to take the place at the Dominion Immigration Hall of a British-born employee who was dismissed, is the fact that the baron was the man who was expected to speak for Germany at the patriotic meeting of all nations recently held in the Industrial Bureau.

At that time, it is stated, he was on the editorial staff of the West Canada, a newspaper which at the opening of the war was offensively pro-German. The editor of this paper was approached by the committee having the big meeting in charge and asked to suggest a man to speak for the Germans of Western Canada. He promptly named Baron Von Amorengen, and accordingly a formal invitation was sent to this man to attend.

On the night the meeting was held the mayor called upon the baron to speak, but there was no response. Heads were craned to all parts of the hall to see if he was leaving his seat to come forward, and the situation created considerable amusement.

The mayor stated that the invitation had been formally sent to the man selected by the committee, and he thought it possible that the speaker would turn up later on. However, the meeting went on and closed without any expression whatever from the western Germans.

The failure of the baron to come forward would leave him open to the charge of being unbiassed to the people of Canada. He might have been excused had he replied to the mayor's letter, or stated over the telephone that he could not be present, but he did neither.

It is of note that the Baron succeeded Robert Adamson, who was dismissed with one day's notice after a service of fourteen years with the department. Mr. Adamson handled the voluminous correspondence from the old country and all letters in connection with homesteads and western settlement. He knew the western prairies like a book, and was in a position to instantly give advice to intending homeseekers as to where to locate. His long experience was an invaluable asset to the immigration department in Winnipeg. When he was fired at a moment's notice he left a desk full of correspondence, and several matters of departmental business that he was negotiating by mail was left to his inexperienced successor. There was no collaboration between the two.

In addition to his extensive travels to all parts of the Canadian west and his intricate knowledge of all the finer points in connection with land settlement, Mr. Adamson had been sent each year to Scotland to select and bring out to Canada a superior class of farm laborers. Those who know of his work in this respect say that the country owes him a debt of gratitude for the sterling qualities of these men, many of whom have since entered farming on their own account.

Mr. Adamson is succeeded by a man who, for political purposes, is taken out of -- editorial office--a man who knows little or nothing of western settlement conditions, and especially the handling of British settlers.

A detailed report has been received of the pro-German attitude and remarks of the naturalized German Kohnen, in his conversation with the Rev. Mr. Blatherwick, an immigration chaplain. Shortly after the war started, he is reported to have said: "You Britishers have been looking for a scrap; well, Germany will show you what war is." Again, he spoke sneeringly of the late King Edward as "The Peacemaker," asserting that it was the kaiser who should receive this tribute. It is stated that Kohnen was the first appointee to the immigration hall after the change of government. He was formerly a turnkey in the provincial jail, and received his reward for political work with the government machine.

It is, perhaps, worth noting that a German, by taking out naturalization papers, in no way prejudices his German citizenship. Section 13 of the German Imperial and State Nationality Law of July 21, 1913, enables a German to retain his German nationality when naturalized in a foreign country. In Great Britain at the present time the authorities are finding plenty of naturalized Germans who require watching and, in some cases, detention.