

THE PROVINCE

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THE IMMIGRATION QUESTION.

Canada owes a very substantial debt of gratitude to the Conservative opposition in the House of Commons for the course it has pursued during the last three sessions of parliament on the exceedingly important question of immigration. We are now referring not to the immigration, especially on this coast, but to the general rule of settlement which has been and is seeking entry to the Dominion. From the time that the present Liberal Government became firmly seated in the saddle it has consistently mismanaged and abused its powers in this great department of administration. It has steadily, and with apparent deliberation, encouraged the class of settlement which the country would be better without it has shown little effort to secure the class which we most need and which would be of the greatest value. Its aim has in the main been to plant colonies here and there in the Dominion and to do so without regard to the quality of those who formed them. In this way the Giddens and Doukhobors were dumped upon the Northwest to become a dread and an annoyance to the decent and responsible citizens of the country. The Government did not demand from these people any certificate of qualification. They were taken in a lump and the best land of the territories selected for their use. That they were unable to speak English, were illiterate, filthy in their habits, and many of them diseased mentally and normally as well as physically, did not count against them with the authorities at Ottawa. One reason, no doubt, for such a policy was the conspiracy organized under the sanction of the Government whereby the organization known as the North Atlantic Trading Company obtained a bonus of five dollars a head on every such colonist brought into the country. The members of this company who dictated to the Government the course it should pursue in immigration

matter, were the recipients of this splendid –?– (unrecognizable) and their object was to make as much as possible in the shortest given time. They found, of course, that “planting colonies” suited their purpose very much better than searching for the best class of immigrants, who as a rule refuse to be connected with colonizing schemes. It will be remembered that Mr. W.T.T. Preston was largely instrumental in bringing over the Doukhobors, and was busy searching through southern Russian and the Balkan states for more such riff-raff when the Opposition in parliament brought about the disclosures in the Immigration Bureau, and that gentleman had to be transferred from that department to the department of Trade and Commerce, where he could do less mischief, at a substantial increase in salary.

It, was the efforts put forth by the Opposition that put an end to this method of settling the country – forced the Government to adopt and put in force measures for discriminating between desirable and objectionable immigration, and through three sessions of the House the labored indefatigably to make the standard of admission high enough to guarantee a good class of settlers. Not has their work been ended yet. They are still **bent** on elevating the standard of “**settlement**” and preventing the robbery of the public through the – of the immigration agent. Mr. Monk’s resolution introduced on Monday is directed towards that end. That resolution is that, “While recognizing the importance of legitimate well-**directed** efforts to encourage desirable immigration, this House declares that it is time to cease paying a bounty at so much per head to agents for immigrants coming into Canada.”

In reply to the sound arguments advanced in support of his resolution by Mr. Monks, the Minister of the Interior **contended** that this – was not an – - - - -

Mr. Lavergne expressed the matter very clearly when he said that “the booking – had only the bonus in view and not the quality of the immigration.” and that the present system brought in the degenerate and destitute of the old land.” Mr. Oliver insults the common sense of the public when he attempts to make us believe that the bonus system makes for discrimination.

But Mr. Monk would go further than merely abolishing the – paid to agents. He would favour the **opposition** of the head tax upon immigrants in this, perhaps, he will not receive the support that his other proposal must generally command. It will be said, and no doubt with much truth, that there is a general clamor throughout Canada for labor, and that, while discrimination should be enforced, nothing should be done to prevent the freest entry of all desirable applicants for admission. Our railways, our increasing number and variety of industrial enterprises, our farmers and our domestic requirements, all call for labor. Without it our progress will have to come to a -. That it has been the **rapidly** of our progress should continue -, whether there is any immediate necessity of filling up the country. And after all there is a good deal more in that question than may appear on the surface. Surely we will admit that it would be well to go slower if in filling up the country rapidly we are to fill it with the wrong