Getting At The Truth Of The Emigration Problem—A British View

(By S. A. Moseley in The Montreal Standard.)

There ought to be no difficulty about getting at the truth of the emigration problem. Yet it appears to be at the bottom of the deepest well.

Either there is a call for men in the Dominions or there is not; either those who do go are treated shamefully or they make good; either our unemployment ought to go (if they can) or wait, Micawber-like, for something to turn up in England.

Let us take this last point first. Should our men leave the Old Country? If there is work—most decidedly! Were I out of a job I would go anywhere and do anything in order to avoid borrowing or "sponging." And in saying this I do not theorize from an armchair. I have had some experience—and I know. As a youth I left an old job before I had obtained a new one. In the earnest desire to save my face I became soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, as the phrase goes.

As I say, I know.

The main thing is to pull your weight in society. Work and the world will listen to you. The man who prefers to idle in England rather than accept work in Timbuctoo gets no sympathy from me—or from anybody else. The question of "hating to leave the bosom of your family," the sentimental regard for one's place of birth and such pleas are so many excuses. In a crisis, get down to it!

WHERE MEN AREN'T WANTED

And we are experiencing an industrial crisis in England. War is not the time or the battlefield the place to debate Utopian themes. There are heaps of things I would do for the poor and the unemployed if I were Dictator. I should be indeed the softest-hearted Dictator who ever lived. But there would be no place in my heart for the idle. Let us do everything in our power to help the willing-to-worker. Down with the shirker!

It surprised me, therefore, to find that there is a disinclination in some parts of the affected areas to go and seize every available opportunity to obtain work in the colonies. Now, cutting out all question of patriotism, mother-love and so forth, every sensible unemployed Englishman would prefer to find work in the Colonies rather than in any strange country. At any rate, there yet remains a tie—and, anyhow, we speak the same language! Why, then, is there a holding back both on the part of the unemployed and on the part of the Dominions? This is a problem I have undertaken to solve with these results:

Firstly, not all the Dominions offer work. Places like New Zealand, Newfoundland, New South Wales and South Africa frankly tell me that they don't want any outside help. "Better put your cards on the table," they say. "We have no State-aided immigration scheme and do not encourage poor immigrants. We can cope with such work as we have." In a word, they haven't got the work for emigrants.

"It is the trained women domestics we want, not men, at the present time of a slump, which happily is passing away," the New Zealand authorities told me in the course of a long conversation.

The same story was told me elsewhere.

THE DISAPPOINTED.

What about other parts of Australia and what about Canada?

Here I am in the possession of two extraordinary pieces of conflicting evidence.

The first is a human document from the Rev. Ebrard Rees, of Merthyr Tydfil, who writes: "Canada is a gorgeous country for the tourist, since it has wonderful scenery. But for the immigrant it is not only a land that lacks the promised milk and honey, but presents colossal problems and difficulties which break hearts rather than make backbones."

Mr. Rees declares that very few emigrants from England who have gone to Canada since the war would hesitate if they were offered the opportunity of returning. Most of them are cowed, disappointed, despairing. And not a few are destitute. Canada has not brought them health and wealth, but unemployment and unhappiness.

Now, Mr. Rees has been in Canada, but it does not necessarily mean that he knows anything more about the actual situation of Canada generally than many people in London know about the situation in England. They told me at the New Zealand office, for instance, that the same outcry of thousands of men wishing to return home was made there last year, and that when an offer in the form of advertisement was made again and again to repatriate the men only four applied.

Mr. Rees quotes a judge at the Court of Sessions at Quebec who was hearing charges against two Scots of Glasgow, saying, "Our emigration policy is dumping a whole lot of young men into this country, brought here under false pretences." Charity offices at Toronto informed Mr. Rees that they estimated the unemployed of their city at between 6,000 and 8,000.

And it is "terrible, for they have no dole, there is no outdoor relief they can claim, and they have no friends." this is a very bleak picture.

But what puzzles the detached investigator is that Canada should go to the trouble and expense of foisting this alleged gigantic ramp on the Mother country when they can get all the workers they want out in Canada. It doesn't sound feasible.

What is more explicable is that unemployment is rife in towns as it is over here, and that what Canada wants and what she makes clear she wants are not men who are after jobs in its cities, but strong, healthy and willing farm laborers. I don't think there can be any doubt on this point. With all the trouble caused by unemployed or discontented men, what could possibly be at the back of the mind of the Canadian authorities in getting these men to come out?

As Commissioner Lamb of the Salvation Army points out in the other document in my possession, Canada, as our largest Dominion, has an area of 3,000,000 square miles and a population of only 8,000,000—or in other words, three persons to the square mile, whereas in England and Wales we have 639 persons to the square mile.

THE ANSWER.

What answer has Canada to these charges of Mr. Rees and others? First, a categorical denial. There is no unemployment at all on the land; there is work for every efficient, willing worker.

Second, no destitute man or woman is permitted to remain in Canada. They are deported. So that the picture of starving men anxious to return to England is untrue. No need to stow away. Just become a public charge and you will get packed home free.

An interesting sidelight on why men won't migrate to Canada was given me at Canada House. These men say that having paid unemployment insurance for years the system should be continued in Canada.

"Why should I lose what I've paid in for years?" say these men.

How about Australia? Colonel Manning, D.S.O., Director of Migration, put the case in a nutshell. Obviously the conditions in the Australian Bush are somewhat primitive, but for those prepared to rough it, to take off their coats and to take the risks that are to be met with anywhere, here is a golden opportunity. Australia has got the land, and is proud of the fact that her non-British element is as low as 3 per cent. Australia, like Canada, and many States whose London representatives I called on, is all "British to the backbone."

Yet we must ask ourselves whether we are sending the right sort of emigrant. The man softened by city life is utterly useless. I happen to know, for instance, that nearly all the Londoners who applied to go out harvesting recently were turned down. And I also saw a confidential report on a number of youths who were recommended as "suitable British emigrants to one of the dominions. I wish I had authority to reproduce what the medical examination revealed.

In one case an insane boy was seriously put forward as a candidate! Another had a criminal history; a third had a grave medical history. I ask, frankly, what is the use of putting such types forward as representatives of British stock?

No wonder that in some parts of Canada and Australia grouses are heard, not only from the emigrants but from the natives who object to the grousers! Obviously, if unsuitable men are sent out they must ultimately fail to please or be pleased, and thus swell the already swollen ranks of unemployed in the cities.

There is, again, the question of women-folk. Canada won't aid emigrants unless they have first had a satisfactory interview with the wives! For the failure of many an emigrant you must once more cherchez la femme.

At the same time it is impossible to overlook the political element in Ottawa. Several private authorities who deal with the problem told me that they felt that certain obstruction to the smooth working of the emigration scheme may be traced in that direction.

I wish I had the space even to summarize the interesting conversations I have had with the Agents-General or my discussion with the Rev. J. H. Pringle, who is Vice-Chairman of the British Dominions Emigration Society. But the plain facts that emerge from my inquiries are these:—

There is plenty of scope for the right sort of emigrant. It is fatal to transport the wrong sort of emigrant, who is the cause of all the trouble. There are hundreds of thousands of acres in the Dominions waiting to be developed; for the healthy, strong, vigorous type of Englishman there is a great opportunity. Many leading men today in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, including Cabinet Ministers, started as emigrants on the land. It is useless for townsfolk to think of becoming farmers all of a sudden. Those who want work in the cities must not think of going.

What is certain, however, is that the States themselves in both Australia and Canada are entirely British in sentiment. They could if they liked import foreign labor from the Ukraine and other foreign parts where blizzards and desolation are as common as rain in London. They could get this labor cheaply, and they could get men who are hardened to the special conditions of the bush.

THE HARD SIDE.

But they are inclined to take the long view. British stock is the best. The right type of Britisher will fight his way against all hardships, and he will help to maintain a better standard of life.

It is in the interests of emigrants themselves that I emphasize the hard side of life in the Bush. The would-be emigrant should ask himself whether he intends to make a fight for it, to work like blazes and win through. It is only when he is prepared to do that and accepts the job in that frame of mind that he stands a reasonable chance.

Given these conditions the Dominions will welcome him and help him. For they know that even if they do not get their full value in the parents they may be sure that the second and third generations will fully repay them.

When the development schemes are well under way the Dominions will take more of our surplus men and women.

An Icy Bath For Boston Horse

HORSE IS RESCUED BY FIREMEN AFTER MAKING ICY PLUNGE IN PARK LAKE

Members of the Boston fire department rescued a horse which plunged through the ice while hauling an ice-scraper over the frozen surface of the pond in the Boston public gardens.

Reparations

Truth (London): The first interest of all parties alike is that the account should be closed and that the three great western nations of Europe should escape at last from the atmosphere of war, which must persist so long as the account is open. For ourselves, our only financial interest in the question is to get as many millions as we can get towards the liquidation of our own dead-weight debt to the United States. The idea that we can ever get back from Germany what we lost between 1914 and 1918 was never anything but a mischievous delusion, as I suppose everybody now understands.

The Royal Dictator

Spectator (London): The peace of South-eastern Europe depends so directly upon the peace of Jugoslavia—was not the origin of the Great War in that very place?—that we most devoutly hope for the success of the King's policy. He starts with a clean slate. The Constitution, the Skupshtina, the County and District Councils, have all been swept away. The future depends upon the triumph of a paradox—the contriving of a liberal policy towards the Croats out of a great initial act of retrogression. Croation hopes "soar up again like fire."

Britain Finds Naval Base at Rosyth Useless

Removal of German Menace in North Sea Renders Big Ship Depot Unnecessary

Pillar of England's Ocean Power During Great War

Discussing the practical abandonment of the great naval war base and dockyard at Rosyth, Scotland, Hector C. Bywater, writing in "The London Daily Telegraph," says twenty years ago the Firth of Forth, although visited from time to time by His Majesty's ships, had no particular significance from the naval point of view. To-day, as I write, battle cruisers and other fighting craft are lying in the Firth, but they are here on a routine visit, which has no connection with the strategic situation at sea. And yet, within this comparatively brief cycle of years, these northern waters formed part of the stage upon which was enacted the greatest drama of modern civilization.

In the British Navy as it now exists we see only a remnant of that mighty armanda that thronged the East coast harbors of Scotland in 1918. In 1908 the dockyard of Rosyth was only a paper project. Ten years later it had become the largest and best-equipped naval base in the world. Yet to-day, little more than twenty years since the first sod was cut, this great base lies derelict, a mute reminder of stirring times that we all hope may never recur.

Germany Plans Conquest.

To trace the history of Rosyth to its source we must go back to 1898, for it was in that year that Germany hatched her scheme for the conquest of the seas. Few in England interpreted the portent betimes. At that date the center of naval gravity lay in the Mediterranean, as it had done for more than a century. But in the early years of King Edward's reign the rapid growth of the German fleet compelled our naval strategists to readjust their ideas. How leisurely this mental process was is indicated by the fact that in 1908—ten years after Germany had entered the lists as challenger of our naval supremacy—we were without a single organized fleet base north of the Thames.

It was not the least of Lord Fisher's inestimable services to his country that he made good this grave deficiency. During his tenure of office as First Sea Lord of the Admiralty work was begun on the new base at Rosyth, which until the theory of far distant blockade led to the selection of Scapa Flow, was designed to be the main base of the British fleet in a war against Germany.

Great War Surprises.

As originally planned, the works at Rosyth were estimated to cost £3,000,000, exclusive of machinery. Upon their completion seven or eight years later a much greater sum than this had been expended. The outbreak of war found the Scottish base far from finished, and for many months afterward a floating dock, hurriedly towed from a Channel port to Invergordon, represented the only means that the Grand Fleet had of docking its battleships within the main zone of war.

Compared with the naval establishments then in being, Rosyth was planned on a grand scale. Provision was made for dredging a basin with an area of fifty-two and one-half acres with a projecting pier, giving a total wharfage of more than 7,000 feet, with a uniform depth of water of thirty-eight and one-half feet. Other works comprised an entrance lock, available for use as a dock if necessary, 850 feet long, 110 feet wide at the entrances, and 36 feet deep over the sill at low water; a straight river wharf 2,730 feet in length; and a large space for coal storage. Three drydocks were constructed ,each about 1360 feet long and 110 feet in width, dimensions far in excess of any warship then afloat or in contemplation. These docks could be lengthened by some thirty feet in case of need. Dockyard facilities were also provided for a large number of destroyers and submarines and with the increasing use of liquid fuel oil tanks were multiplied.

It is not too much to say that Rosyth was one of the main pillars of British sea power during the World War. To the spacious docks, up-to-date equipment and skilled staff of this great yard the Grand Fleet owed in large measure the maintenance of its material efficiency. Practically every major ship in the fleet was docked at Rosyth, and in many cases extensive repairs were carried out at the yard. At the date of the armistice 7,230 hands were employed there—not an excessive total in view of the fact that the Grand Fleet, at the same date, numbered at least 260 vessels of various types.

British Forsake North Sea.

With the extinction of German naval power at the close of the war the strategical outlook at sea underwent a radical change. It was clear that the British fleet could serve no useful purpose by continuing to cruise in the North Sea, which no longer harbored a potential enemy.

Nevertheless, the Rosyth yard continued for some years to function as a repairing base, and numerous ships were refitted or reconstructed there between 1919 and 1924. In April, 1921, 6,000 work people were still on the pay roll. At that date, and for some time after, the Rosyth docks were the only naval docks in the kingdom sufficiently spacious to accommodate H.M.S. Hood and the large bulged capital ships of the fleet.

In 1922 and subsequent years Rosyth, in common with all other naval establishments, felt the edge of the economy "axe." The final blow fell in September, 1925, when this yard and the establishment at Pembroke were jointly ordered to be closed down. By that time the staff at Rosyth had been reduced to 2,500.

Rosyth was only one, albeit the most important, of the chain of naval stations that sprang up round the Scottish coast in answer to the German menace. For several years before the war Invergordon, on Cromarty Firth, was undergoing development as a secondary base, and the building of oil tanks began in 1912. The headlands guarding the anchorage, the North Sutor and South Sutor, were fortified, the defences being erected and manned by marines, who were accommodated in the old battleship Renown. Admiralty officials were meanwhile surveying Scapa Flow, where it was proposed to establish naval magazines and build wharves, but very little had been done by the outbreak of war.

Dreadnoughts Kept in Port.

Another base, chiefly for submarines, was being prepared at Dundee. On the West Coast, Lamalash, situated on the Firth of Clyde, had been approved as a naval anchorage, while Loch Ewe was founded on August 10, 1914, as a secondary coaling station for the Grand Fleet.

It is of interest to recall that the approaches to Loch Ewe were heavily mined by the German minelayer Meteor in September of that year, just after the dreadnought battle fleet had arrived there to coal and clean boilers. Among the ships temporarily blockaded was the Fleet flagship, the Iron Duke, on board of which Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord, and the chief of the war staff had betaken themselves to confer with Admiral Jellicoe. Fortunately the mines were soon swept up, though not before they had claimed several minor victims.

All Englishmen Love Their Rugger

AN EXCITING MOMENT IN A STRUGGLE FOR THE BALL

Roselyn Park public schools and St. Edmundians meet in a rugby match at Richmond, England. The players are seen in a jump for the ball.

AUTHORITY ON BLOOD

Prof. Hans Fischer, Munich, has discovered what causes blood to be red and produces a synthetic blood. It may revolutionize the diagnosis of bacteria in human blood.

Canada's Dairying Industry Growing

Tourists Account for 15,000,000 Pounds of Butter and England Takes Much Cheese

London, Ont.—However sparingly visiting motorists spread the butter on their bread, they at least managed to consume an aggregate of $15,000,000 pounds of butter in Canada last year.

This is an official estimate, supplied to the convention of the Dairymen's Association of Western Ontario here by J. A. Ruddick, dairy commissioner for the Dominion. Mr. Ruddick said there had been 3,000,000 visiting motors from the United States in Canada for an average of several days each during 1927, and the result had been to provide a market for 15,000,000 pounds of butter. The figures for 1928 would be about the same.

Mr. Ruddick, as well as officials of the association, said that conditions in 1928 had been excellent for the dairy industry. Included in the outlets for Canadian dairy products in 1928 were a growing domestic trade in eastern Ontario.

George A. Barr of the Ontario Department of Agriculture said that Canadian cheese has been maintaining its prestige in England, and Ontario and Quebec had built up an enviable connection in the United Kingdom.

Canada is recovering its export trade of milk and cream to the United States, according to W. S. Stevens, of the Canadian Dairy Council. He said Canadian dairy trade with the United States was now practically back at the old level.