

SESSION II.
1921.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION

(ANNUAL REPORT OF).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

Department of Immigration, Wellington, 1st June, 1921.

Herewith I have the honour to submit the annual report upon the immigration which has taken place into New Zealand from the United Kingdom during the year 1920-21.

I have, &c.,

H. D. THOMSON, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. W. Nosworthy, Minister of Immigration.

REPORT.

It is gratifying for me to be able to state that there has been such a marked expansion of the immigration movement during the past twelve months, and that under the existing Government policy the statistical return quoted hereafter shows a record for the Dominion since the inception of assisted immigration. That such a large number has been absorbed without disturbing the industrial conditions of the Dominion is sufficient evidence as to the prosperity of the country and its capacity for absorbing immigrants of the right type.

It has been stated from time to time in certain quarters that a large influx of immigrants would have a detrimental effect on the labour-market, and it was therefore deemed advisable to have a census taken in the early part of 1920 setting forth the number of registered factories in each trade or industry, the shortage of hands existing in these industries, together with the number of machines idle as the result of lack of operatives to work them. This return showed the number of factories registered in New Zealand to be 12,703, and the total labour shortage 12,937. The employers stated that they had exhausted all reasonable means in their power to obtain labour, and generally suggested that in immigration lay the chief remedy. At this date the repatriation of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force men was almost completed, and it was considered opportune to bring into force the new regulations governing the expansion of the then immigration policy considered necessary to deal with a most important problem—post-war immigration. Because of the fact that New Zealand is situated at such a great distance from the base whence our supply of immigrants is drawn, it is essential that none but the best quality should be despatched to our shores. The present policy—the main point of which is “open nomination”—ensures this result, for not only can private individuals take advantage of the reduction in passage-money offered under this scheme, but also all employers of labour, and to the latter this is the most important factor, for it gives to all industries requiring skilled labour the privilege and opportunity of choosing their own requirements. This concession, which previously was restricted to only near relatives (by blood or marriage) of the nominator, has already been taken advantage of by several employers, who recognize that not only do they benefit, but that the immigrant is immediately absorbed in an occupation profitable to himself and becomes a permanent asset to the country.

This expansion of the past policy from restricted to open nomination has proved an unqualified success, as the year's figures go to show; but it was not due only to this fact that the number of immigrants far exceeds that of any other year for the past forty years, for in addition it was considered