

4th Day.]

LABOUR EXCHANGES AND EMIGRATION.

[2 June 1911.]

Mr. BUXTON—*cont.*

our labour exchanges, as now constituted, after they have had over a year's working in reference to the question of emigration. We have had from time to time vacancies notified to us from the Dominions, and we thought that instead of the somewhat spasmodic method of dealing with them at present, it might be well if they were put on a better basis. In reply to what General Botha, and I think Sir Joseph Ward, said, the object of this proposal, if the Dominions co-operate with the labour exchanges, would be this very selection to which they referred, because our proposal would be that only those persons should be sent out who had been passed by the representatives here—the Agents-General or the High Commissioners or whoever it might be. It would be no question of our sending men out without proper inquiry or without proper recommendation; in either case they would be necessarily passed by the representative here, and would only be sent out to fill specific vacancies of a suitable character.

But I think it is clear, after what has passed, that at all events as regards one of the Dominions, they do not welcome the method of dealing with the matter through the labour exchanges. Under these circumstances I certainly should not press it as a resolution. At the same time, in regard to New Zealand and the Commonwealth and the South African Union, we shall be very glad to be put into communication with them through their Agents-General or High Commissioners to see how far we are able to co-operate with them in what they desire. As regards the question of cost I am afraid I can only say it is the recognised policy, not only of this Government but of previous Governments, and I think successive Governments, that they do not see their way to advance money for the purpose of emigrating British subjects from here. It may be right or it may be wrong, but that is the view they hold. I think Mr. Batchelor's point, that in the case of the notification of a vacancy by the time the man got out it might be filled, would apply equally to those who came through the labour exchanges. Our suggestion is that no emigrant should be sent out without the vacancy being actually open for him, and they would remain if done through the representative here.

This resolution was brought forward with the object of raising discussion and to see if the various Dominions desired to co-operate in it, and also to show, as far as His Majesty's Government is concerned, that they are not backward in this matter of emigration, but are desirous of co-operating as far as they can with the various Dominions concerned, and that on the whole they consider this was the best way of doing it. I trust those Dominions who see their way to discuss the matter with us further will do so, and we shall perhaps be able to remedy such difficulties as exist. We should be very glad to co-operate and consider the matter further in the case of South Africa and New Zealand. As regards Canada, for the reasons given by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, I understand it is hostile to the resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we may assume that this resolution is withdrawn, and that the Government here will communicate with any Dominion which thinks we can be of any assistance to it at all, in regard to emigration apart from actual monetary assistance but assistance in other ways in the selection of persons they might wish to obtain for their own Dominion.

ENFORCEMENT OF ARBITRATION AWARDS.

"That the Imperial Government should consider, in concert with the Dominion Governments, whether, and to what extent, and under what conditions, it is practicable and desirable to make mutual arrangements, with a view to the enforcement in one part of the Empire of Commercial Arbitration Awards given in another part."

Mr. BUXTON: As regards this question, it is a very difficult and complicated legal question, as Dr. Findlay will recognise, and I do not think any useful purpose would be served if I endeavoured to enter into it in any detail. The object is: "That the Imperial Government should consider, in concert with the Dominion Governments, whether, and to what extent, and under what con-