

9 June, 1911.]

EMIGRATION.

[6th Day.

Sir JOSEPH WARD—*cont.*

does appear to me to be as much as any of the countries can reasonably expect from Great Britain, and I would suggest that this first portion of the resolution be altered to the effect that the Conference endorse the policy of the Home Government in connection with British emigrants.

Mr. BATCHELOR : That is the same thing.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : The resolution as it stands seems to me to convey the impression, or might convey the impression, that we are not satisfied with the aggregate number going to the oversea Dominions, and I think perhaps you might see your way to alter it in the direction of affirming what has been done, and expressing the hope that it will continue. It reads in a double way, which I had not noticed until I listened to Mr. Burns's speech. It reads as if we wanted to have some extra steam put into the machinery here to send people out to our countries. I do not think we do. For instance, in the course of the remarks of Mr. Burns about the population of Scotland during the last 10 years, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that New Zealand has increased its population almost entirely from British subjects by twice the number Scotland has during the last 10 years. The numbers that we are getting we are absorbing, as I said before, as they come; and from our point of view I should be very sorry to see Scotland depleted. Ireland has been depleted to a very large extent in the years gone by, and I myself should be sorry to see the impression conveyed that we wanted an increased exportation of British subjects from the Old Country to the new ones.

Mr. BATCHELOR : There is nothing in the resolution to that effect. It says : " That it is desirable to encourage British emigrants to proceed to British Colonies rather than foreign countries "—that is all.

The CHAIRMAN : May I suggest a *via media*? I think I would insert the word "continue." " That it is desirable to 'continue' to encourage British emigrants to proceed to British Colonies rather than foreign countries "; and may I make a suggestion for alteration in the second paragraph : " That the Imperial Government be requested to co-operate," because they are co-operating, and I think it should run : " to co-operate with any Colonies desiring immigrants." I suggest stopping at the word "immigrants." I think we mean the same thing, but if you put in the word "assisting" it looks like a demand for State-aided emigration from here, which is not the intention. As at present worded it is a little misleading.

Mr. FISHER : I have no objection to that.

The CHAIRMAN : Then it will read in this way : " That it is desirable to continue to encourage British emigrants to proceed to British Colonies rather than foreign countries. That the Imperial Government be requested to co-operate with any Colonies desiring immigrants." I presume there is no objection to the word "Colonies" there, because, of course, we have Crown Colonies as well as Dominions.

Might I also suggest that the remaining paragraph be eliminated? I ask that on this ground : We keep the Emigrants' Information Office in the closest possible touch with the High Commissioners and the Agents-General. We obtain all their information from them continuously; but the Conference will understand that the Emigrants' Information Office is not designed to promote emigration to any particular Dominion. It is designed to give absolutely frank and accurate information to the Englishman wishing to go abroad, to whatever country he wishes to go; but, as a matter of fact, the information given is almost exclusively in relation to the British Dominions, and the operation of that office has undoubtedly had a deflecting effect towards the British Empire. But if you were to introduce on the Committee of that office representatives of all the Dominions or of all the States of the various Dominions you might have