

acres; but we are to double that quantity in our sales. The lands disposed of in the United States by tree grant and under tree-planting conditions during eleven years from 1868 to 1879 amounted to 47,140,000 acres; but we are to sell in eleven years 21,760,000 acres, and dispose of 10,830,000 acres more free. Although I quite admit that there are other considerations to be regarded in this comparison; that a large quantity of lands was in the same time disposed of by railway companies in the United States, and that therefore in applying their figures we must make considerable allowances, still I think these figures furnish us with some ground on which to base our calculations. I have no accurate information as to the sales of railway companies' lands. I do not pretend to be able to inform the House on the subject, but it is well-known that the railway belts in the United States are as a rule infinitely narrower than ours, that the United States itself owns the alternate sections of these lands, and that the greater portion of the land called railway lands by us could not be so denominated according to the system of the United States. But we expect to sell twice as many acres as the United States sold in ten years. Well, may our hopes be realised! But can we afford to venture the future of our country upon the realisation of those hopes? That is the present question. There is, however, a still more important point to refer to in connection with this subject. I will give the number of acres taken up for farming purposes in the twelve great States and Territories to which I have referred, at three different periods, as compared with the population. In 1850 the population was 2,740,000. The number of acres taken up was but 35,000,000, or twelve and a half acres per head. The number of acres of improved land, was 12,900,000, under five acres per head of the population. In 1860 the population was 5,610,000. The land taken up was 67,450,000 acres or twelve acres per head, and the improved land six and one-third acres per head. In 1870 the population was 8,665,000. The land taken up was 95,190,000 or under ten and a-half acres per head. The improved land was under six and

a-half acres per head. You thus find that in those States which are pointed to as the example on which our progress is to be based, there were only during the most progressive period twelve and a-half acres of land per head taken up for farms, and five or six acres per head of improved lands. Compare this with the figures the hon. gentleman has given. Grant him the 550,000 emigrants he estimates, he still assumes that these will take up 32,640,000, or more than fifty-nine acres per head of the population. The hon. gentleman may say "that is my liberality, I am offering ever so much more land than United States has given, and it is natural that more land will be taken up per head." No doubt that accounts for part of it, though for how much, I will not pretend to state; but I hold and believe that it is impossible seriously to act on the assumption that nearly five times the acreage per head will be taken up in the North-West that was taken up in the most prosperous period of the development of the States I have mentioned. I think that the calculation of the hon. gentleman has been demonstrated to be utterly fallacious. It proves that either the hon. gentleman has over calculated the number of settlers on farm lands to the population, or that he has over calculated the quantity of land each settler will take. One or other of these propositions must account for the difference. You cannot seriously assume that fifty-nine and a-quarter acres per head will be taken up with us where the United States dispose of only twelve and a-half acres to each head. Can it be said that experience proves the probability of this calculation so satisfactorily that we should commit ourselves irretrievably on the chance of its realisation? These figures are suggestive also in another respect, that of revenue, to which I have referred. You find the proportion improved is very small in proportion to the amount taken up, in the earlier period not much more than one-third, or four and three-quarter acres per head. I quite agree that our lands being largely prairie, we may expect to improve or render productive more rapidly a larger acreage than the average improved acreage in the Western States, and due allowance is to be made for that circum-