

meat, show it to them and mock them. They did not know how to put a remonstrance, and quietly left the place. Mr. Milestone said they were no good, but I told him that if they got fair treatment they would do very well. I got evidence of the fact, and laid it before Mr. White, of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Then, some of these men went back, and Mr. Milestone has since written a letter in which he states that he has handled men for thirty years in railway construction, and a better class of men he never handled than those 300 Doukhobors. But, he saw that their consciences were not interfered with, and that they were properly treated. The same experience is told by Mr. Sullivan, one of the foremen on the South-eastern road. When some 300 or 400 Doukhobors went down to work on that road, he had difficulty with them at first, but as soon as they understood that they would get fair treatment, and be properly housed and fed, they gave every satisfaction, and Mr. Sullivan says he never had a better gang of men.

The highest record for grading work done by any man in the North-west Territories is held by a Doukhobor working on that road. He made \$119 in twenty-four days at dump work. Now, with regard to the Doukhobors, as I have said I spent the winter of 1899 with them. There were six hundred of them around me in the hall where my office was. I was passing out and in among them all the time. I had the best citizens of Winnipeg come to see them. On Sundays, these immigrants generally occupied the evening in singing their psalms, and I had the choirs of the various churches come in. There were people about them there all the time; and surely, if there had been anything immoral or wrong, we should have had an opportunity to know of it. I have watched these people and studied them for the last three or four years, and I defy any one to show a single case of anything wrong or unchaste in their conduct. I wish, here in my place in parliament, to give a denial based upon my knowledge of these people, to the statements that have been made here, and not only that, but to statements made in another place within the last two weeks. I think it is a disgrace—I cannot use any other term—that public men and public journals should cast such aspersions upon people who have suffered so much for conscience sake as these Doukhobors have. Now, where do we find the greatest opposition to these Doukhobors? Certainly not where they are best known. Swan River around, Yorkton and Rosstern, the three colonies, are situated out from these towns—and what do the people of those towns say? When it was said that 150 of the Doukhobors were going to California a couple of years ago, the Yorkton Board of Trade, a body composed of men of all shades of politics, met and passed

a resolution asking the government to do what it could to keep them here. Take the statement of such a man as Mr. Thomas Meredith, one of the strongest merchants there. He said to me: McCreary, when you trust one of these men to pay you on a certain day for a bag of flour or other goods that he has bought, you may make up your mind that on the day, and at the very hour agreed, he will be there with the money or with a satisfactory explanation—and we cannot say that about all the other settlers. It is true they do not buy as largely as some of the others. But they do buy. And what is the result? The hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace), who is largely interested around Yorkton will bear me out in saying that, whereas in 1896 Yorkton was so dilapidated that you could buy a lot on the best street for \$50, that town has taken life, and to-day you have to pay \$1,500 for the same lot. This is evidence of what effect the Doukhobor, Galician and other immigration has had upon the country. They have built a school-house there of solid brick, costing \$10,000, and a church costing \$15,000. And that Protestant church is patronized by these very Doukhobors and Galicians. I think I have said enough to show that these people will become good settlers. The only thing, apparently, that can be said against them is that in some of their peculiar laws, they do not agree with the laws of Canada. Now, from some of the remarks that fell from the lips of the hon. member for Kingston (Mr. Britton) the other day, when he was urging the establishment of a divorce court for Canada, I do not know that we have so much to boast about in our marriage laws.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. McCREARY. I am not giving my own opinion, but am referring to what the hon. member said. He quoted cases in Toronto and other cities throughout Canada showing that there was a very serious condition of affairs. Now, as a matter of fact, while the Doukhobors have a peculiar system of marriage, there can be found only one case of divorce among them during fifty years. The authority of that is Count Tolstoi, the authority for that is Prince Hilkoﬀ; the authority for that is Alexander Konshin, of Moscow, a gentleman who belongs to the Greek Church, and has no connection with the Doukhobors, who is a merchant prince of Russia, and a man of the highest standing in Russia and in Europe, a man whose word I would take at any time. The authority for that is John Bellows, of Purleigh, Essex, the leading Quaker of England, a gentleman whom I have heard went to the peace conference at the Hague, as personal representative of Her late Majesty, a man of the very highest standing in Great Britain. Surely the word of such a man should be worth more than the utterances

Mr. McCREARY.