

some compact which has intervened between the government of England and the clergy, are kept in ignorance by the priests of that province; that their only hope of salvation, if they want to establish a distinct French nationality in Quebec, is to throw overboard their religion and cling to the philosophical ideas which prevail to-day among a certain class of Frenchmen. He invites them to pursue that principle, and in pursuance of it to estrange themselves from their English compatriots. Do hon. gentlemen on the other side applaud that proposition? For my part I dissent from it entirely. No more sinister and no more unwise exhortation has ever been addressed to the French Canadian people. It is not surprising, that whatever may be in other respects the merit of this book, it has been received coldly in our province. I venture to say that the day when the people of Quebec will become estranged from the Christian belief, and will look upon their compatriots of other origin as strangers; when that day comes then all hope departs of building up in Canada a great Commonwealth of united people. Mr. Siegfried, I suspect, belongs to the school of some of the public men of France, who, through one of their authorized spokesmen, have declared in the French Chamber, that the time has arrived in France for the people to banish once and for all the name of God from that country; that when they look up to the stars at night they will all believe that there is nothing beyond these stars; no God, no Christ, no hereafter. I do not for a moment, discuss the deep causes that may have provoked that condition of affairs in France, but unfortunately such it is. A great number of people who do not belong to the Catholic Church, a great number of eminent writers, express sincere regret that this state of affairs exists. I say it has produced this condition—that there are at present in France, perhaps, ten millions of people who would be prepared if, in the proper way, the advantages of this country were shown to them, to consider emigration to Canada; large numbers of whom would come to this country—eligible people who would make excellent settlers and would quickly become accustomed not only to our political institutions but to our national life in every sense. It may be these possibilities that my hon. friend from Montmagny (Mr. Armand Lavergne) had in view when he spoke of the singular remissness which this government has shown in encouraging immigration from that great country.

Now, Sir, my hon. friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Lemieux) made a declaration which, I must say, surprised me. He spoke in answer to the proposition—a proposition to which I give my cordial adherence—that we should endeavour to secure as settlers in that great domain in the west—which has cost us so much sacrifice in money, in

effort, and even, in a certain sense, in blood—in the first instance our own people of the east. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Lemieux) objected that the clergy in the province of Quebec were opposed to people leaving our province and going to settle in the west. I wholly dissent from that proposition, and I say there is no proof of the truth of it. My hon. friend (the Postmaster General), with considerable astuteness, referred to some statements made by the late lamented Archbishop Taché. Well, Archbishop Taché as is well known to all of us who were acquainted with that eminent prelate, at one time considered that that great country, in which he had at a very early period performed wonders as an apostle and missionary, might not be fit for settlement. Was he the only one? Did not friends of the Postmaster General declare time and time again in this House that in building the first transcontinental line we were committing a folly? Did they not declare that that transcontinental line would not earn enough to pay for grease for the wheels? Was it not Mr. Blake who declared in this House that that British Columbia was a sea of mountains and would bring no good whatever to the Dominion? Hon. gentlemen opposite have changed their minds upon that subject; and everybody knows that, long before he died, Archb'shop Taché al'o changed his mind upon that subject. Time and again, he has told me, under my own roof, that he had altered his views, and considered that land one eminently suitable for settlement by our own people. And this government itself knows to the contrary of the proposition laid down by the Postmaster General. Has not the government made a very important arrangement with a religious congregation in our own province, granting them a very large tract of land in the Northwest, on the condition that they would, under certain specified terms, settle that land? Does not my hon. friend (Mr. Lemieux) know, that, on account of the solidity that is found among the clergy, that an agreement of that importance would have been impossible if as a body, as he pretends, the clergy of our province disapproved of that most important movement. And are there not at this moment—there certainly were a few months ago—in the employment of this government two members of the clergy of our province engaged, with the assent of the clergy generally in the work of repatriation. There is not an occasion when clergymen from the distant west come to our province, but we hear lectures in praise and approval of the migration of our own young farmers to the west in order that, along with the young men of other provinces, they may have the first choice in picking up our best lands in that most important domain. And has been