

born amounted to 265,000, which I see is exactly the number the hon. gentleman stated, and I fancy that, when the full figures are in our hands, it will be found that he is correct in saying that the apparent increase was 265,000, and that I am correct in stating the same figure. There is another quotation which the hon. gentleman has evidently not understood. One part of the charge, advanced by myself, and advanced from this side of the House, has always been that the policy or impolicy of the Government has been such that it has driven away a very large part of the younger portion and flower of our population, and that by so doing this, further and heavy loss has been inflicted upon our people, that the actual rate of increase has been reduced far below the natural rate of increase. I have observed in the comments of the hon. gentleman's press, and the hon. gentleman's supporters, that there appears to be an absolute incapacity to understand what I thought would be an absolute truism, that the actual increase in any country does not necessarily agree with the natural increase. It may be largely in excess of the natural increase under certain conditions, and it may also be largely below the natural increase under certain conditions. I turn to a country which, unfortunately, in many respects, affords too close a parallel to our own. I turn to the condition of Ireland, as shown by the late census. I suppose there is no one here who knows anything of the habits of the Irish peasantry, in regard to early marriages, but would suppose that the natural increase in that country would be largely in excess of the number of deaths. We find, however, that, whereas the population in 1881 was 5,174,000, the population in 1891 had sunk to 4,700,000 souls. It would sound almost like an Irish bull to say that the rate of natural increase in Ireland showed a decrease of 400,000 souls. Sir, one part—and I want to emphasize this—one part of our charge against the hon. gentlemen is this: that the impolicy of their system, one direct result of this most vicious system of taxation, is greatly to impair the natural rate of increase. You drive out of our country a very large percentage of the younger portion of the population, and you thereby considerably reduce and diminish the natural rate of increase. I should think that is a proposition which every hon. gentleman could verify from his own experience with the greatest ease. Some years ago a number of newspapers throughout the country took occasion to treat this question, giving the fullest possible particulars, with the names and addresses of the young men who had left from a very large number of towns and villages, and, Sir, the result was perfectly appalling. Out of a male population of two or three hundred, we would find a loss of one hundred within the space of six or seven years. In towns with a male population of two thousand, or two thousand and two or three

hundred at most, the newspapers were able to print, I am sorry to say, lists showing a loss of young men from those regions, of six or seven hundred; and so on in proportion. Now, Sir, it is a fair question, I admit, whether, in taking two and a quarter per cent as the natural rate of increase of population in a young country with an unlimited amount of fertile land at our disposal, I put it at too high a figure. All I can say is that in naming two and a quarter per cent, I have not merely followed the opinion heretofore expressed by pretty nearly every writer of authority who has dealt with the question as applied to young countries in our condition, with a sparse population and lots of land available, but we find that statement is confirmed in a most striking fashion, first of all, by the experience of the United States, taken when they had no immigration, and when the numbers of their population closely resembled ours, and next, by our own experience in the decades from 1851 to 1861, 1861 to 1871, and from 1871 to 1881. Sir, under the circumstances I am perfectly justified in stating that the effect of this policy is that the natural increase of Canada is largely in excess of the present actual rate of increase, and the cause of it is the loss of so very large a portion of our younger population. Now, there is no man on the floor of this Parliament who ought to know that fact better than the hon. gentleman himself. What is the state of affairs in his own province? Why, the state in his own province is that the population is all but stationary. While in the decade from 1871 to 1881 the population of Nova Scotia increased about 50,000 souls, in the decade from 1881 to 1891 the population hardly increased 10,000 souls: and, Sir, to come home to the hon. gentleman—thee represents the county of Antigonish—I turned up the records of the county of Antigonish, and I found that in 1881 the population was 18,060, whereas in 1891 the population was only 16,112; there was an absolute loss, by the census, of 1,948, and the whole natural increase besides. But that at my figures, at 2½ per cent per annum, which are equivalent to 25 per cent for the ten years, would amount to 4,512, and that county which the hon. gentleman represents shows a loss of close on 6,500 people during the decade. Sir, I have some right to say to the hon. gentleman that, representing such a county, coming from the province of Nova Scotia, representing, as he does, the Maritime Provinces, which show the very worst record which it is possible to imagine, which show absolutely stationary conditions—I say I have some right to say to the hon. gentleman that this state of things requires the most serious and earnest consideration of the Government. Now, let me ask, under what conditions is it that the natural rate of increase is far in excess of the actual rate of increase, or, to put it in another way, that the actual rate of increase in a country like ours falls far below