

own coarse grains to the corn standard, and not only the coarse grains, but also the products of animals that are fed upon coarse grains. Our prices would be brought down to the corn standard of the United States as against the barley standard of Canada, if we were brought down to a level with the United States. Their prices would control our prices. They are the greatest agricultural country in the world to-day, there is hardly any limit to their production, and their prices would determine our prices, and we could not help ourselves. Our prices are better than their prices and will continue to be better, provided we continue to persist in those methods which we have adopted in recent years in order to keep those prices up.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Then the hon. gentleman is opposed to free trade in natural products?

Mr. COLBY. Most decidedly, from the farmers' standpoint. I know whereof I speak. The hon. gentleman has devoted many years to the study of philosophy; I have devoted many years to the study of agriculture, and when I first came to this House I was one of the largest agriculturists in my county. For many years I had studied agricultural problems from a farmer's standpoint, and I am sure the farmers of this country will endorse me when I say that free trade between Canada and the United States in all agricultural products, would be the worst possible thing that could happen to the farmers of Canada at the present time. I am ready to meet the hon. gentleman on any platform in Canada to discuss that question with him before the farmers. Now, what I said of Vermont is true of the State of New Hampshire. The Commissioner of the State of New Hampshire has put forth a similar address, inviting the people of the world to come in and buy farms which are for sale in the majority of the townships of New Hampshire. The farmers are no better off there than they are in Vermont. My hon. friend delighted his side of the House just now by quoting from a Township's paper, the *Richmond Guardian*. Now, I will quote from another paper. I am sorry the hon. member for Huntingdon (Mr. Scriver) is not here. I will quote from a paper in that hon. gentleman's county, the *Huntingdon Gleaner*. Nobody doubts the thorough Liberalism of that paper, and here is what it says:

"We look across the lines, only a few miles distant from where we write, and we see farmers, skilful, industrious and shrewd men, with free access to that market of sixty millions we hear so much about, and what do we find? That they are not so prosperous as their brothers on the Canadian side; that their land, when of equal quality, sells for less, their taxes are higher and their profits smaller. When Mr. Wiman goes to Malone or Champlain and satisfactorily explains why the farmers of Essex and Franklin counties, with the market of sixty millions open to them, are worse off than those of Chateaugay and Huntingdon, to whom the market is all but shut, we will place some faith in what he says."

That is from the *Huntingdon Gleaner*, a very deserving newspaper, and that is penned by a very intelligent writer.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. He is an equal righter, is he not?

Mr. COLBY. I think that is an authority that the hon. gentleman will not dispute. Then the *New York Post*, which I believe is recognised as a paper of authority and standing, says:

"Six years ago, a farm of 150 acres sold for \$12,000; it was sold again about two months ago, bid in by the mortgagee who held a \$6,000 mortgage upon it, and has since

been in the market at that price with no takers. In other words, this shows a shrinkage of one-half in price in six years, and is a fair showing of the decrease of the values of land with us. Prices of farm produce are quoted by the Department of Agriculture as lower than ever before known."

Then we have an official report made to the New York State Legislature in 1887 (Vol. II, No. 24, page 16), and what does it say?

"It is an indisputable fact that the farming lands of this state during fifteen years have depreciated at least 20 per cent. and many agricultural localities are decreasing in population."

A despatch to the *New York Tribune* of the 8th February says of the farmers in New Jersey:

"Many of the best and oldest of them say they cannot make both ends meet, and that the outlook is not encouraging."

I am not going to continue these quotations at any length. The *New York Times* states that the farms in that State are mortgaged for over \$700,000,000, and further shows that the greater portion of the money obtained on mortgages has not been expended in farm improvements, but to enable the farmers to live. I will not go into the question of farm mortgages at any considerable length, but, in the most prosperous of the States, their amount is enormous. These statements are not made up from localities selected by any hon. gentleman for his own private information without taking any account of the discharges, but we find that, in the three prosperous agricultural States of Illinois, Michigan and Indiana, the mortgage debt amounted to the following sums:—Illinois, \$381,322,339; Michigan, \$129,229,553, and Indiana, \$106,855,884. These are reliable facts. The hon. gentleman has spoken of the rural population of Ontario, which he says is almost stationary. I am not surprised at that. I would be surprised if it had largely increased during these years to which he refers. What has happened since this Government came into power? New occupations have been found for men since that time. All through this Canada of ours there are manufactures which give employment to large numbers of men, railway construction has gone on enormously, and hundreds and thousands of our population are engaged on the railways, in the coasting trade and in moving the internal commerce of this country which had no existence before. Then the great North-West has been developed, and we know how many have gone there. One of the former members of this House is now Premier of Manitoba, and many young and older men, and many large families have been deported from Ontario to the North-West. Then look at the progress of our great cities. Look at Toronto, Hamilton, London, Montreal, and see how the urban populations have increased, and see the increase of population in the manufacturing towns. Of course that has absorbed some of the agricultural population, but we have not retrograded, and I was glad to hear the hon. gentleman admit that, notwithstanding all this, Ontario has not diminished in population. This is not the case with any of the Eastern States. Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Michigan have decreased in population. So has Iowa, and even in Illinois a recent report of the commissioner stated that migration westward is going on from the best parts of that State. As to the exodus which is so much talked about, there was never a greater humbug