

manufacture from one country to another; it will merely dispose of it to the United States instead of holding it in Canada; and in a very short time the farmers' last state will be found to be worse than the first. What I emphasize to hon. gentlemen opposite is the fact that they are not making very much progress in the cure; they are not affording very much relief to the farmer who is getting less for his grain and paying more for his implements.

Coming to boots and shoes, what has been the result? The hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) will hope it has not been much; and I venture to suggest to hon. gentlemen to my left that if they want this session to test this government's fidelity to its platform they might just make a drive on the duty on boots and shoes. The Minister of Justice (Sir Lomer Gouin) has gone; he no longer reigns in that powerful seat. The hon. member for Quebec East has taken his place. He went through the West denouncing protection. I repeat, if hon. gentlemen want to test just how far the Minister of Justice believes in their policy, let them centre their attack, let them face their barrage against the duty on boots and shoes. When you touch only the class that comes from Britain you do not affect things so much; but in the condition of the boot and shoe industry to-day the Minister of Justice will take very good care that the profane hands of hon. gentlemen to my left will not be applied to that schedule, a schedule which powerfully concerns his county.

They got into the woollen field; they lowered the duty on British woollens, the reduction being 2½ per cent in some cases and in other minor cases 5 per cent. With what result? It has multiplied the introduction of British goods and brought about the displacement of the Canadian product, with the consequence that since the first of 1923, of our 124 woollen factories in Canada 20 have closed altogether; and as regards the 124, of all their machinery, cards, looms and all the rest 40 per cent are idle at the present time and the artisans have passed to the United States. The government have thus relieved the unemployment problem to the satisfaction of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Murdock). And the process still goes on. All these "evidences of prosperity" I hold now to the view of hon. gentlemen to my left. But the "evidences of prosperity" do not stop here. What is the real test of the attractiveness of a country? Is it not the success with which that country maintains the basic population of which it is composed? Is not

[M. Meighen.]

the first object of government, after defence—for defence, of course, comes first, and all of us in the generosity of our hearts will congratulate this government upon its noble efforts at defence—after defence, surely, is not the first object of every administration, is not the very reason for a government's existence, so to pursue public policy as to hold within the country the people who inhabit it? The country belongs first to its parent stocks. These parent stocks are here, and a government that fails to hold that class of population labours in vain in searching the cities and back lanes of Europe to get people to take their place. Unless we can first set ourselves right and pursue a course which makes it worth while for the people of the Dominion to stay at home, that makes it worth while for our parent French-Canadian people and our parent English-Canadian people, to stay at home, what futility is the effort to get other people to come in, themselves to become mere transients, passing through the sieve of Canada into the great reservoir to the south!

Now, what has been going on? I read with some amusement a speech made the other day by the hon. Minister of Labour (Mr. Murdock) in which he tried to persuade an audience in Montreal that, after all, we were not losing very many of our people. I went to the trouble of getting figures on the subject, and I know of no reason why they should not be given to this House. I have the official figures from the American government, giving the exodus from Canada of those who declare themselves as intending to reside in the United States. These figures do not include those who go over there, I am sorry to say in large numbers, and do not so declare themselves, but who nevertheless remain within the folds of the republic. In the year 1921 the figures run, per month, 5,611; 4,308; 4,500; 6,009; 5,680; 4,644; 2,919; 3,763;—to be brief, an average for the year of 4,410 per month. This was the year proclaimed by hon. gentlemen opposite as a year of great distress, this was the year during which they expended so much pity upon the people of Canada for having to live under the sway of the government of that time. For 1922 I will give the figures too, because I recall that the Prime Minister argued two years ago that the effect of our policy would not pass away for a few months, but that after it had passed away the sun of prosperity would shine. I am going to show just how fast the clouds have receded and the sun has risen since he came into office. In 1922,