

marked there than it is in this country. Cases have come within my own knowledge of sons and daughters returning to their homes in Canada to spend the lean years with their parents on the farm, and to wait until an improved state of affairs in the United States induces them to go abroad again. The mere fact that we have had good times in Canada is not sufficient to affect the exodus. Speaking from my own experience—and I presume it will be borne out by that of nearly every person present—there has been a greater scarcity of labour, a greater difficulty in finding men, either for the farm or for railroad construction, during the past five years, than there was previously. It is well known too to almost every one that it is almost impossible to obtain a sufficient supply of domestic servants in this country. So that there is no evidence to sustain or to justify for one moment the amazing contention of the government that all the growth of population between 1880 and 1900 is to be credited to the party in power. It is a monstrous proposition for which there is no warrant whatever.

The hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce quoted figures to show that the city of Toronto had a larger number of unoccupied houses four or five years ago than it has to-day. We all know that. But the argument borrowed from the experience of the city of Toronto is a perfectly fallacious one. There was a boom in that city some years ago, resulting in a temporary increase of population and the erection of a large number of houses. But the boom broke with the usual consequences. There was widespread loss, many men gave up buildings they had erected, losing them altogether, and a great many people who had been attracted to the city by the boom left. There can be no question that for a number of years there was a great depression in the city of Toronto. But that city is now gradually overtaking the excessive rate at which it advanced for a short time, and by a healthy natural growth the population has once more overtaken the supply of buildings, which accounts for the condition of affairs that exists there to-day.

But the Minister of Trade and Commerce is sure that there was an exodus, and he furnishes a reason which to my mind is conclusive. I believe there was a large exodus between 1881 and 1891. I do not accept many of the arguments of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, but there was one which struck me as being most convincing. He said that from 1881 to 1891 he went backwards and forwards in the province of Ontario a great many times. He denounced the government of Canada, he cursed protection in all the moods and tenses. He preached to the people of Ontario that they were being ruined, bled white, that the government was in alliance with combinationists, that the whole thing was an

organized conspiracy to make the poor man poorer and the rich man richer. Is it not fair to conclude that when the hon gentleman spent his time in thus proving to the people of Ontario that this was a poor country to live in, that there was scarcely any security for life, and none for property in this country, he must have had considerable influence in driving the people of Ontario across the border? If I had time, I would like, in support of the argument I have just advanced, to furnish the House with some of the speeches delivered by Sir Richard Cartwright on the stump at that time; but I will quote a few words which he uttered in this House in 1885 in reply to the budget, shortly after the first minister of that day had been to London and had there urged the claims of Canada for a share of the emigration from the mother country. The Minister of Trade and Commerce, standing in his place as a critic of the administration said:

I doubt if the First Minister were well advised when he intimated that it was desirable that there should be a large immigration to Canada.

He goes on to say:

If many had come to Canada, even to Ontario—

Which he seemed to think the best part of Canada—

—they would have found themselves in a position where they could only be provided for by displacing the native population.

The fact that the hon. gentleman, standing here as the critic of the administration, could deliberately challenge the conduct of the First Minister in asking that immigrants of the most desirable kind should come to this country, and could warn them against coming, is sufficient to give us some idea of the kind of arguments he would address to the people on the stump, without the controlling and modifying influence of the fact that in this House men's speeches are reported, and there is a chance of their being held to account for their utterances. So that the only thing his argument that the population of this country had not increased, but that there was an exodus, proves is that he was busy in the province of Ontario, during the period from 1881 to 1891, in endeavouring to convince people that Canada was not a good place to live in and was a good place to live out of. I think I have said enough with regard to the census to show that there is not much basis for the figures and criticisms given us by the hon. minister. And if we are to be asked to believe that Canada stood still from 1881 to 1895, it will be necessary for some better arguments than have been given us by the hon. minister.

In rebuttal of the hon. minister's statements, there is a host of facts. For in-

M^r. BELL.