

ment. We have some observations in this Speech upon the general condition of the country. It is agreed by all of us that an essential element in the progress of our country, and particularly since the acquisition of the North-West, is the increase of our population. In that regard I am afraid we are not able greatly to boast. I remember, during the years of the late Administration, the feeling appeals that were from time to time made from these benches. Why, I almost saw tears drop from the eyes of gentlemen opposite when they lamented the depletion that the country was suffering under the malign influence of the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie). We were told that the country was being ruined by an exodus, not more important in its quantity than its quality—that the lifeblood of the country was going to the States. That was told during those five lean years—those years in which the figures upon which hon. gentlemen based these statements, and which have never been disputed until now. The figures presented in the United States immigration returns, were as follows:—

In 1873-74 .....	30,596
1874-75 .....	23,549
1875-76 .....	22,379
1876-77 .....	22,039
1877-78 .....	21,474

a steadily decreasing quantity, and an aggregate of 120,037. It was upon such a showing, both as to the numbers and as to the ratio in which these numbers were diminishing annually, that those lamentations were poured out. Hon. gentlemen who poured out those lamentations forgot that there were five years in which they had held office before, and in which they had not been so deeply moved by this depletion, when the figures had been quite different. They had been quite different, I admit at once. They were as follows:—

In 1868-69 .....	30,921
1869-70 .....	51,510
1870-71 .....	47,082
1871-72 .....	40,288
1872-73 .....	37,569

an aggregate of 209,400 as against 120,000 in the disastrous years, or a larger amount by 89,000, or nearly 75 per cent. than that which excited the deep grief and woe of hon. gentlemen opposite when they occupied these benches. But Sir, they have gone back to office and the exodus has also returned. They have come back to Ottawa, and the people are fleeing the country. When hon. gentlemen quoted the United States figures they had not then found out that they were wholly unreliable, that they were entirely exaggerated, that they were cooked figures, prepared for a purpose, and did not represent the truth. On the contrary, they thundered these figures at us, and we not possessing the acuteness and intelligence of hon. gentlemen opposite, did not say that the United States cooked the figures. Upon the same statements, the figures for the last year amounted to 99,500, and for the quarter following to 37,779, or a total of 137,279, in the fifteen months last past, being 17,200 more than left in the whole five years of my hon. friend, 17,000 more than left in all that period of lamentation; and yet I have not heard a single groan or observed one isolated tear from hon. gentlemen opposite over the departure of their fellow countrymen. Well, Sir, I do not say myself but what we ought all to weep together under the circumstances. We will condole with you if you will only weep with us. You have here a total immigration into the United States in the last year of 450,000 people, and of that total little Canada has contributed two-ninths. Her share has exceeded that of England, has exceeded that of Ireland, has exceeded that of Germany, has exceeded that of any other contributor. Our share for fifteen months has been  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the whole population, and had there been a similar transference of the population of the United States to us, we would have had an addition of 1,800,000 souls to the population of Canada. No doubt the

exodus of which the hon. gentleman complained was largely composed of the normal transference, because the figures are small, but no one can doubt, who has paid anything more than a passing attention to the subject, that these other figures represent an exodus which is wholly abnormal—a serious and calamitous depletion of our most important resources. But we are told, Sir, that we ought not to complain of these things. The hon. Minister of Finance admitted that this exodus was a thing to be deplored, but he said it was not well to exaggerate the thing. He said he found that matters were quite different from what they were represented to be, and he found this by making a careful comparison between a year which ended on the 31st December, and one which ended on the 30th of June; at least, if he did not do so, it is a remarkable and an extraordinary fact that the figures that he gave are those for the year ending on the 31st of December instead of on the 30th June. I say we ought not to keep silence; I say we ought to enquire, and, if possible, ascertain what the causes are of this large removal; for even if there are great mistakes in these figures, even if the United States census-takers and statisticians are getting less and less correct every year, no one can gainsay the fact that there has been a large, an unusual depletion of our population. I say, Sir, that we ought not to keep silence. Did hon. gentlemen opposite keep silence? What we say here, in this country and in this House, concerning this affair, with a view to ascertain what the difficulties are, and if possible to remove them, is one thing, but it is quite another thing when the First Minister, with all the authority of his position, standing in the most conspicuous position in which a First Minister could stand, addressing in London a deputation of Manchester merchants, expresses himself thus:

“The consequence is that all the ingenuity, all the ambition, all the mechanical skill and enterprise of such of our young men as have a distaste for agricultural pursuits, or prefer industrial employment, go to the United States. The men who thus leave our country are of the brightest, wisest, ablest, most ingenious. All go away because they can get employment in the United States, where there are manufactures. They won't be farmers and we lose them.”

You will notice, Sir, that the hon. gentleman speaks in the present tense. The figures told us the quantity, the hon. gentleman tells us the quality of the emigration. We have, first, the thousands which are rolled up by those who count the heads, and then we have their value in the hon. gentleman's estimation. Such an emigration, and of such a character, is surely deserving of an allusion, even in the Speech from the Throne. But it is my belief that the hon. gentleman was in error in describing the cause and the character of that emigration. I believe that a large number of farmers leave this country in order to farm elsewhere; and that, besides losing some of our young men, who want to do other things, we lose large numbers of those who, under other circumstances, would remain on the farms of the older provinces or settle on the farms of the newer districts.

It being six o'clock the Speaker left the Chair.

#### AFTER RECESS.

Mr. BLAKE, resuming, said: There is one statement in the Speech which is a repetition of the statement of last year, and which, I am sure, we have all read with very great regret—that the condition of the Indian population has been such that very large sums have once more been required to save them from starvation. I always dreaded, from the moment at which it was thought and determined to be necessary to engage in a very large system of aid to the Indians, that we should have a permanent charge of that kind on the finances of the Dominion. We know that once you let a population of that kind believe they are to be fed, they will want food, and although on this occasion this demand may have been, to a great extent, justified by the failure of the food supply, yet I fear that, since in two successive years it