

entered into any analysis of the statements of the Minister of Agriculture, which were laid on the Table to-night. I find it difficult to reconcile his returns in many respects with the returns which we get from England. I see that the British returns for 1883 give an immigration to Canada of 44,100 English, Scotch and Irish, and 9,400 foreigners, or a total of 53,500; while our returns give 133,000. I am unable to see, although I have looked hurriedly at the hon. gentleman's statement, where the other 80,000 come from. I see something in it, however, which perhaps indicates the character of these figures. I see that there has been an increase during the year, according to these figures, by immigration from the States to Algoma of 6,000, and to Port Arthur of 4,000, odds. I presume that the bulk of these people are navvies who were brought in to work on the Canadian Pacific Railway, that they represent those 9,000 good Canadians whose sufferings from the loss of work were to be so serious; but that there has been a real settlement at Algoma of 6,000, and at Port Arthur of 4,000 people from the United States alone, I fancy no one will believe. But this circumstance indicates the transitory character of that population which I am sorry to see is set down as a satisfactory and valuable increase to our population in those sections. Now, if you turn to the Province of Quebec, you find that the population of 1871, was 1,191,500; that of 1881, 1,359,000; and that the increase, according to the Census, during the decade, was 167,511 or 14.06 per cent. If you apply to that Province the natural increment, at United States rates, it would be 262,182, showing that there has been a loss of 94,671, besides all the immigration which came into the country during the decade. In other words, the Province of Quebec has lost its immigration, and 94,671 souls besides. Now, it should be observed that one-fifth of that whole increase is in the city of Montreal, for the rate in the country is much lower. Where did all these people go to? They went, the hon. gentleman said, a great many to the Eastern States, some of them to Manitoba and a few of them to Ontario. But when one compares the population of 1871 with that of 1881, the increase in the French population of Ontario is not so great as I had supposed at first it was. The immigration of French Canadians to the eastern States has, no doubt, assumed alarming proportions, in two respects—first, in the extent of the departure, and secondly in the character of the exodus. It is proved by the very thorough examination that took place in the year 1882, under the instruction of the Legislature of Massachusetts into the question, that it has only been within the last ten or fifteen years that this immigration has assumed such large proportions in that part of the country. It was only within a much shorter period, five or six years before 1882, that it began to assume the character of a permanent settlement in the country to which these people went. One of the resolutions which was passed by a gathering of the French Canadians of Lowell, recites as follows:—

"Whereas, since the French Canadians have come to this section they have reached a population of 400,000 in New England, and whereas a large number have become proprietors, paying large taxes, and whereas for the most part the young men propose to make their home here,—

"Resolved, that we protest against the portion of the report which says that we 'are a horde of industrial invaders.'

"Whereas, we have to live five years in this country before we can become citizens of this glorious Republic, and the French Canadians have been here in large numbers but five or six years, there are over 200 voters of this class in Lowell alone—"

Then amongst the witnesses examined was Mr. Millet, and he is asked this question:

"Mr. WRIGHT. If I understand you, the attempt was made by the Canadian Government to repatriate French Canadians from the United States?"

"Father MILLET. Yes, Sir; not only that but great inducements were offered if they would return; and some of them did return, but of those who did go, a certain proportion returned to the States again and, in a

majority of places, the thing was a total failure, so much so that the subsidy which was given has been withdrawn.

"So that the work of repatriation has ceased?"

"It is the desire of the Government that they should return, but it has ceased to pay; though it encourages immigration to all parts of Canada, it has ceased to subsidize these agencies."

Further on he is asked:

"But have the French been in a transition state, during the past five years, as the result of the establishment of and failure of the repatriation system, and the gradual establishment of churches here?"

"A. I should consider that especially for the last five years this has been partially so. I look upon it now as a permanent population.

"Q. And that permanency has just begun to take a positive form?"

"A. You mean, take it from ten years back?"

"Mr. GAGNON. From the establishment of our churches?"

"Mr. WRIGHT. From the establishment of the French Canadian churches in America, the permanency of the French population began?"

"A. The permanency of the French population was secured."

There is Mr. Lalime, who says:

"I wish to tell you what I know personally about this immigration matter. I have been appointed Agent by the Federal Government in Canada since 1875, and I am still the Federal Government's Agent for the New England States; that is, what you might call the repatriation Agent. I wish to state this that, as stated a few minutes ago by the Rev. Father Millet, this repatriation is almost a failure, if it is not a total failure. Why? Because we have work in the New England States; because everybody finds occupation and our Canadians will not go west, or a very few of them. For the last four years, gentlemen, for the last three years, we certainly have not sent from New England more than, I should say, thirty families—I mean sent to Canada or any one of the Provinces of Canada, or to Manitoba. Quite a number from the other side have gone to settle in Minnesota and Dakota."

Mr. Gagnon says:

"I was the Agent of the Government at that time. We sent about 600 families to Canada and about 300 only stayed there; the other 300 did not settle, but came back to this country, or if they did not come to this country, did not settle on the land given for the purpose by the Government of Quebec."

Mr. Dubuque says:

"The most overwhelming fact that we can bring to bear on this question is, that for the last ten years, in every place where the French have settled, it is a known fact that they have doubled, if not trebled, in population. Now, if they were coming here and earning money, and going back to Canada, how could it be possible that the population would double and treble in such a short time? It must be that there is a new influx from Canada right along, and that those who are here stay here continuously. Now, we are prepared to show, by various witnesses, that it is the minority, the very small number, that go back."

R. Gagnon says, again:

"Mr. WRIGHT. Briefly, our idea is, that the tendency to permanency has gained strength?"

Mr. GAGNON. Many come with the idea of earning money to pay off their mortgages. With the aid of a *compère* in Worcester, I have written some papers for them, and I am quite sure that others could testify as I do, that many of them come with this idea; but we write more papers to those who are in Canada, buying from those who are here, and holding property there, than for those who want to return. They come with this idea of going back, but their idea changes, and they sell their property to land owners in Canada."

Mr. Bourvier, ticket agent, gives the following evidence:—

"Now, Mr. Bourvier, I believe in your business you are also ticket agent; sell tickets from Woonsocket to Canada?"

"A. Yes, sir.

"Q. Can you tell us what is the disposition of the French people, about going back to Canada to live?"

"A. We do not have many that go back, and those that do go, we most always see them back here again.

"Q. Whether the French population of Woonsocket has decreased during the last ten years?"

"A. It has increased very largely; it is now between 6,500 and 7,000."

Dr. Fontaine, of Spencer, Mass., says:

"Q. Will you please state to the officers of the Bureau what you know about Canadian immigration or repatriation?"

"A. There is not much of it done in Spencer.

"Q. How long have you lived in Spencer?"

"A. For the last ten years. When I went there the French population was 1,600, ten years ago. The last Census gave us 3,450. Now, as to immigration and travelling, you can say that it don't pay over there to be a railway agent. I was agent there for the Vermont Central, and I had to give it up, I could not make it pay. Last year I was agent and I sold only ten tickets for Canadians going to Canada."