

as to those directing the best business papers, and those who are working for the establishing of just such companies as we would desire to have. It is said that Frenchmen are not usually considered to be a migrating people, but that statement is hardly reliable, when we consider the fact that they were the discoverers of one-half of the new continent.

Mr. COURSOL. In support of the words which have fallen from the Secretary of State, I beg to read an extract from a letter which was lately received from a gentleman in France. I have translated it, and I shall read it to the House, as I believe it has a bearing on this subject :

"France is greatly in need of an outlet of her surplus energies—for want of an opening, they become stagnant.

"Let the working classes in France once find out that labour is well paid and land cheap in Canada, there will be no difficulty in persuading them to turn their faces towards the Dominion. This season, a thousand good French emigrants, able to pay their way, with some resources left to resume, in better conditions, the struggle for life, are expected to sail for Canada.

"In the wake of the emigrants, the industries and arts of France will follow, so that the whole country, for the loss of her citizens, will find full compensation in the double movement of the balance of trade to and from Canada.

"The French tradesmen and labourers who go out to Canada, as a rule, are sober, industrious, intelligent and skilful in the exercise of their handicrafts—besides they are thrifty and saving.

"When they leave France, they never go empty handed, but take with them small sums varying from \$100 to \$1,000.

"In short, the emigration from France is supplied by the most active and enterprising members of the working classes, who might have done well at home, but who had the ambition to better their situation in life.

"The emigration from France, small as it is, can now be discerned as an element of progress in the Dominion.

"The French Canadians will gradually be initiated by them with the newest methods and appliances in all scientific and industrial pursuit, whilst French trade and capital will rapidly follow in the footsteps of the pioneers.

"The present troublous times in France are predisposing families of means to forsake their native land and seek shelter in Canada.

"It is not rare for the owners of ancestral chateaux and estates to apply for pamphlets at the Canadian agency of Paris. Some feel themselves oppressed in their religious belief, others in their political servitude; some are ruined by change of Government, others by financial disasters, whilst an influential minority are completely estranged by a form of Government to which they cannot reconcile themselves.

"Last year, six titled noblemen, among whom the Duc de Blacas, and the barons de Vézé and de la Rue, have settled themselves in Canada, and a number of young men of good family have settled both in Quebec and Ontario.

"This spring, about forty farmers from Brittany, with means, are expected to go to Winnipeg."

Now, we expend large amounts of money to promote immigration from England, Ireland and Scotland, and we have agents in the chief cities of every one of those countries. We bring immigrants also from Sweden and Germany, and even from Russia, at a large cost to this Dominion. Now I, for one, complain, and I regret exceedingly, that the Government have not thought it proper to have a sufficient amount put in the Estimates, to be placed at the disposal of the agency in Paris. It is only the paltry sum of \$2,500 which is in dispute, a sum less than is paid to every agent and sub-agent employed in England or other parts of Europe. Mr. Fabre is known to perform his duties with much ability; but he has no staff, and no assistance whatever; he is provided with no pamphlets for distribution; in fact, nothing has been done by this Government to promote French immigration to this country. Now, I think it is time that some means should be provided for encouraging that immigration. Pamphlets have been issued at the cost of private individuals; but the Government have provided no possible means for instructing the French people as to the trade of this Dominion, and as to the value of our boundless lands and forests. I hope the day is not far distant when we shall seek immigration from France. There are seaports in France from which the immigrants could be sent to Canada at a trifling cost to the Dominion. We encourage the poorest classes of population to come to our shores from other countries; but there are in France people of means who are ready to come, and who would become good and loyal citizens of the Dominion. We have

in the factories in Montreal, men of a high class, who have come from France, and who are a credit to themselves and to the parties which brought them here. Why did they bring them out? Because they had a knowledge of the trade. In the glass factories, and in many other factories, these men are employed. We know the value of their services in France, and that value can be enhanced in this country. I hope this is the last Session when we shall not see a proper amount placed in the Estimates to the credit of the immigration agency in Paris. Whether there may be some difficulties in connection with the British Ambassador that I am not aware of, or whether our agent may not be recognized, is not the question. The main thing is for this Dominion to recognize its agent in France, and to provide him with the means of expounding the knowledge of this country, and then the immigration will come.

Mr. LAURIER. The hon. Secretary of State said he was surprised, because, as he put it, I had decried France, the land of his and of my ancestors. I do not admit that I decried France, or any other country. I maintain that I only spoke the truth, and I would not hesitate to speak the truth on the floor of this House, even if it should be disparaging to my own country. The first duty of a member of this House is to speak the truth, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant. No one would be more pleased than I if I thought we could harbour the hope of inducing French immigration to come to this country. I am of French origin myself, and it is natural to suppose that it would be most pleasant to me if it were possible for me to induce immigration from the land from which my ancestors came. But we have the fact staring us in the face, that at the present moment the population of France is decreasing—not on account of immigration, but from social causes to which I do not care to allude. Under such circumstances, it is vain to attempt to promote immigration from that country. Until the population of France is brought to the healthy state that it will increase from natural causes, I maintain that it is useless to have an immigration agent in that country. The people will not emigrate. I am informed by the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) that the immigration from France to the United States has been, in ten years, 73,000, or an average of 7,000 a year. What has been the immigration from France to this country? Where are the proofs of immigration to be found? Where are the agriculturists, the class that we want? Is there a single agriculturist to be found in the country to-day who has come from France?

An hon. MEMBER. Yes.

Mr. LAURIER. There may be one here and there, but that is all. There have been a few mechanics come to the cities, and I am sorry to say that at one time it was thought better to get rid of those mechanics.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. When?

Mr. LAURIER. Six or seven years ago. Since then, we have had no mechanics from France. At all events, that is not the class we want. The class of immigrants we want, above all, are agriculturists, who will settle on our North-West lands, and I am sorry to say I do not think we can get them from France. The hon. gentleman told us that we bring poor immigrants from Ireland. Of course, we shall have immigrants from Ireland; but France is differently situated from Ireland. If the Irish emigrate, it is because of the bad land laws; but in France they have that very peasant system which it is thought would prevent immigration from Ireland. I would be only too happy if I thought that any effort to promote immigration from France would be attended with success; but, judging from past experience, it is not, in my opinion proper to spend a single dollar for that purpose.