

Mr. POPE. Hon. members could not get over the figures, which were clear and explicit. They might read newspapers and letters from agents showing that a certain number of passengers had gone from Inverness or some other place, but it could be shown that they were, for the most part, going because they had business to do there. He believed they would find a greater number of passengers travelling from every port in this Dominion, last year, than had travelled during previous years; because there had been a general increase of business, and with increased business a greater flow of money; and, of course, when people got money they were found travelling. But he would tell hon. gentlemen that there was no exodus of any consequence from this country, at the present moment, and that there was a larger emigration from the United States.

An hon. MEMBER. No.

Mr. POPE said the hon. gentleman knew nothing about it. When people talked about emigration from this country, he could tell them that they did not take into account the immigration into this country from the United States. There was no doubt there was, and would ever be, emigration from this country into the United States, and the figures would show, if hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House would look at them, that what they disclose, and what they try to make the country believe about everybody who was leaving, was altogether incorrect. Of course, there was no doubt that the country being more prosperous now there were more passengers passing through Port Huron than some years ago.

Mr. CHARLTON said he had been amused at some of the reasons assigned by hon. gentlemen for the extent of immigration to the United States. Admitting that emigration did exist, the hon. member for Prince (Mr. Hackett) told the House that the people were going from Prince Edward Island to the United States because they had friends there. Their friends in the United States seemed to have a great attraction to them. That was one of the reasons operating powerfully in the matter of emigration to the United States. During the last eleven years something like 3,500,000 emigrants had gone into that country. Their friends were drawn to that country from Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, and other countries; and the hon. gentleman from Prince (Mr. Hackett), told the House that people were going there not because they were not doing well in their own country, but because they imagined they could do better in the United States. The hon. gentleman, as well as another hon. gentleman, informed the House that in their opinion the United States immigration statistics are defective, because, in their opinion, all travellers into that country were counted as immigrants. He thought, also, that the hon. the Minister of Agriculture advanced that opinion.

An hon. MEMBER. So they are.

Mr. CHALTON said they were not. The United States Customs authorities, when entering a person as an immigrant, inquired of that person his last place of residence, whether he was a citizen of that country, and his destination, and if he represented himself as an inhabitant of a foreign country, emigrating to the United States for the purpose of settling in it, he was entered as an immigrant. If the person was an immigrant his goods passed in free.

Mr. POPE. From the evidence given by Mr. Averil, those questions are not asked because it is a matter of impossibility in the limited time. It would take, he said, twenty men to do so.

Mr. CHARLTON said he knew that trains were detained long enough to enable the Customs officers to make the enquiries the law required, and these officers were not particularly scrupulous about detaining railway trains.

The following letter from the collector at Port Huron would bear out his statement:

"CUSTOM HOUSE, PORT HURON, MICH.,

"COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, 29th January, 1881.

"SIR,—In reply to your enquiries as to the manner of obtaining immigration statistics at this port, I would state that it is the practice for the United States Customs Officers to cross the river to Point Edward upon the arrival of all passenger trains from the East. They then get on board the trains and examine all the hand baggage and parcels in the coaches, and at the same time ascertaining, as nearly as they can, the number in each coach. Announcements are made in each coach, that all persons from Canada will have to claim their baggage and effects upon the arrival of the train at Port Huron. Upon the arrival of the train at Port Huron all baggage from Canada is unloaded, and must be claimed by the owner, when it is opened and examined, when the owner is interrogated as to the place they are from, where they are going, and their intention to remain permanently in this country.

"All baggage of passengers from the Eastern States, passing through Canada, is manifested at the port; when the car leaves the United States the manifest contains a description of the package, together with a check number, this manifest is placed in the car, the car sealed by a United States Customs Officer, and sent in bond to this port, when the car is opened by a United States Customs Officer, who compares the contents of the car with manifest, and if found correct the baggage goes on to its destination without further examination. Two and sometimes three officers cross the river and upon arrival at this port, five and sometimes six officers are employed in examining and passing the Canada baggage, and it often takes an hour or more to make the examination on a single train. The Grand Trunk Railway furnish men to open baggage and to obtain such information as we may desire.

"All parties arriving from Canada with effects, intending to live here, have to make an entry of the same and make oath that they intend to become permanent residents in this country. Passengers going to Manitoba or other British possessions are not classed as immigrants, the furnish an invoice of value of their effects and bond is given for their delivery at their destination.

"We class all immigrants as from the country they started from, not as from Canada. Immigrants from Europe are classed from the country of their last permanent residence. The practice at the Great Western railway is the same, and quite a large number cross the frontier by teams as well as at the different points.

"Respectfully,
H. N. BOTSFORD.

"To Mr. GORMAN,
"Sarnia."

He hoped this information from the United States' Collector at Port Huron would satisfy the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. POPE said there was no confidence whatever to be placed in it. He could prove that by the collector's own officials. His salary depended on the business he could get.

Mr. CHARLTON said it would be understood the hon. Minister of Agriculture, in his place in the House of Commons, discredited the statistics furnished by the United States' Customs officers, especially the one at Port Huron, also the authenticity and reliability of all American statistics.

Mr. POPE. No.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK. That is your statement.

Mr. CHARLTON said if the immigration statistics at the port of Port Huron were not reliable, as the hon. Minister of Agriculture would have this House and the country believe, then the immigration statistics of the United States were totally unreliable. He held that the statement made by the Collector of Customs at Port Huron was a satisfactory one. He knew from personal observation, having crossed Port Huron repeatedly, that two or three Customs officers boarded every train, that every passenger who had baggage was interrogated, and the utmost pains taken to ascertain the correct destination of these passengers.

Mr. BOWELL. I may give the hon. gentleman a little information as to the manner in which the United States authorities at Washington have obtained their statistics in one class that has come under my notice. They send to the Customs Department of this country to ascertain the amount of imports from the United States, and in every instance the amount has aggregated two or three millions more than their records showed. I merely give this as an instance to show they are not as infallible as the hon. gentleman would lead us to believe they are.