

stead of in this country? I would be glad to have a reply to that, as it has never yet been answered.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. The reason why two or three dredges have been built at Lockport is, that these vessels could not be built in this country. There were no establishments to build them here, and so true is this, that those companies who have had to obtain dredges for the purpose of works in this country, have been obliged to go to the United States to have them built. We required them, they had to be built, Parliament gave us the money, and therefore we had to go where they were built. When the time comes to give the explanations fully, I will give figures and facts which will show the hon. gentleman that I am sustained in what I say.

Mr. RINFRET. (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, it is, perhaps, rashness on my part to rise from my seat and address this House after the hon. Minister of Public Works (Sir Hector Langevin). I should not have dared to do it had he made to-day, as he has made in other circumstances, one of his practical speeches, teeming with facts and arguments, and I should have left to others, holding a higher position than mine in the Liberal party, the task of refuting his arguments. The House must have seen with surprise that the hon. Minister of Public Works, while speaking in answer to my hon. friend, the member for South Brant (Mr. Paterson), intrenched himself behind general remarks, which have been repeatedly refuted in this House. In fact, it is not the first time that the Liberal party is charged with want of patriotism. Not very long ago the hon. member for Cardwell (Mr. White) flung this accusation at the face of the Liberal party, because we refused to expend \$30,000,000 in the North-West, in order to aid the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The hon. Minister of Public Works has once more flung this accusation at us to-night, and why? Because we refuse to expend enormous sums of money to attract European immigrants to our shores, and because we want to aid our poor countrymen who are obliged to leave Canada to go to the United States. It must be admitted that these two circumstances are very far from making us liable to a charge of want of patriotism. I have been fairly astonished to see the hon. Minister of Public Works refuting in such a peculiar manner the statistics furnished by the hon. member from Brant. In fact, what answer did he give to these statistics, so carefully prepared by my hon. friend? He has purely and simply denied the truth of his assertions, but he has not given one solitary figure nor one solitary argument to contradict them successfully. True, he has given, himself, a few statistics in an opposite sense. He has endeavoured to show that a great many foreigners are coming to us; but of the emigration of our countrymen who are leaving us to go to a foreign country he has not said a word. He has not given one solitary figure, which proves that he has not for a moment taken that matter under his consideration, and he has only taken into account the foreigners who come to Canada. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is high time that the Government should adopt a policy of some kind or other to solve at last this political and social problem of the emigration of Canadians to the United States, in connection with European immigration. I think it is high time that we should make some efforts to know which are the causes of the emigration of our people to the United States, and that we should try to remedy the evil, if such a thing is possible. My hon. friend, the member for Brant, has given a certain number of statistics, which, according to the hon. Minister, are not accurate; but that hon. gentleman has not given, himself, any statistics on emigration, to contradict the figures of my hon. friend, as I have just stated to the House. We have a right to blame the Government for not preparing statistics on this subject themselves. Whose fault is it, in fact, if we have not any, and if we are obliged

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to give certain calculations which are, in a measure, based on suppositions? The fault lies with the Government, who have not taken the trouble to prepare those statistics, and to furnish to the House sufficient data on which to base our calculations while dealing with this important subject. But there is a curious argument put forward by the hon. Minister of Public Works. He has pretended that if a great number of our people emigrate to the United States, on the other hand, a still greater number of immigrants come to us from Europe. That seems to be his way of balancing these two states of things. There is a fact which has been proved by modern science, and that is, that the physical strength of a State does not depend only on the number of its population, but of what physical and moral strength it possesses. There are in a country people who are useful and people who are not. Some people may be rather an encumbrance than anything else. That has been our experience as regards a large number of immigrants who have come to us from European cities. Several newspapers, even among those which are Conservative in politics, are forced to admit that we are daily receiving immigrants who are not at all useful to us. By the way, I think I ought to remark to the Government that those who are really useful are immigrants belonging to the farming class, coming from the country parts of Europe, because these people will contribute, like ourselves, to the increase of the wealth of the country, by taking lands either in the North-West, or in the Province of Quebec, or in the Province of Ontario. Most of the immigrants who come to us, and who belong to the industrial or labouring class, cannot be of any advantage to the country. In fact, they are only taking the place of our own fellow-citizens, who are obliged to go abroad, and they can only make a much-to-be-regretted competition to the labourers we have here. Why do our labourers leave Canada to go to the United States? Evidently, because wages are higher in the United States than they are here. And why are wages higher in the United States? Because there is greater scarcity of labour in proportion. And the more labourers will come here from Europe the greater the disproportion in wages will be, and the greater will be the number of our countrymen emigrating to the United States. Mr. Speaker, I think that if we should take into account the number of immigrants who come here, and who are not useful to us, if we should compare them as to their real value with those who are leaving us, we would arrive at the conclusion that the country gains nothing whatever by the exchange, and that it even loses to a great extent. In fact, who are those that are leaving us? A few men belonging to the liberal professions. Thus we find a great number of French Canadian doctors living in the United States; there are also lawyers, but that is due to the over-crowding of the liberal professions. Then a certain number of labourers out of the great mass of those who emigrate are certainly farmers, and I think this fact has already been stated in this House by the hon. member for Bagot (Mr. Dupont). The hon. member from Bagot has stated in a speech that a very large emigration from Canada takes place. I will take the liberty of reading here an extract of this speech, because I think it contains statistics which are the most accurate; they are in direct contradiction with those which were given by the hon. Minister of Public Works. Here is what that hon. member said, on the 13th of February last:

"Thus we learn by the last Census that the population of the county of Iberville has decreased by an amount of 954 souls; that of the county of Verchères by 328; of the county of Laprairie by 400; Napierville, 1,100; Chateauguay, 2,000; Huntingdon, 900; and there are various other counties in the Province of Quebec where the population has not increased. However, Mr. Speaker, the county which I have the honour to represent, and whose population increases but slowly, because all the land is cleared, has, nevertheless, each year a large excess of population; the excess of births on deaths is from 500 to 800, which, during a decade, for a county having a population of 21,000 inhabitants, as the county of Bagot, would give a surplus of from 5,000 to 8,000 inhabitants, and by applying the same proportion to all the counties in the Province, we would have a surplus of 350,000 inhabitants per decade, taking only into