

tion of the immigration now coming into Canada, whether from European countries or from the United States, to the northern parts of Ontario or Quebec, this land of which we know nothing, would he consider it a good and wise act in the interest of the country to do so? Would he not consider it infinitely more to the advantage of the country, infinitely more a public service for which he could claim the gratitude of the people, if he should prevent the attention of settlers being directed to these less advantageous situations, and turn their attention and their steps towards those portions of Canada which are so desirable for the incoming settlers as we know the prairies to be? That country is already opened up by railways. We are told on the authority of the ex-Minister of Railways and Canals, Hon. Mr. Blair, that it is capable of receiving a population of five or six million souls; a population equal to that of all Canada to-day could find homes and could prosper and be served by the railway connections that already exist in the Northwest. In that public domain you have one of the estates belonging to this country, an estate upon which the public money has been spent in order to make it profitable; an estate that will add to our national wealth and strength. Every settler who is sent, whether by government interference and assistance or otherwise, to make a home in northern Quebec and Ontario, as compared with one who goes to the prairie land, to the Saskatchewan country in the Northwest Territories or Manitoba, would be a most unprofitable subject to Canada. Place the settler upon the rich lands of the west and he becomes a prosperous citizen; at once he begins to accumulate wealth; and every dollar that he accumulates goes to swell the aggregate wealth of Canada. The man who takes up a farm on the prairie, is able, within a year or two, to export \$1,000 worth of wheat. He swells the exports of the country, and the effect of his work is to increase the imports to an equal amount, possibly a larger amount. On the other hand, the settler in the forest, in the country along the line of the eastern section of the proposed transcontinental railway, might support himself but, unquestionably, he could not have a surplus to swell the exports and imports of the country and attract more and more the favourable attention of the financiers of other countries and the people of the world at large to the wonderfully favoured land in which we live. To my mind, the highest considerations of patriotism should have led the right hon. Prime Minister to devote the attention of his government and the resources of the country to exploiting, in the first place, the profitable estates of Canada that lie in the west, and leave these less profitable, these worse lands—we will not say 'bad' lands—which may well be left until the good lands of the country have been fully occupied. Now, to

Mr. BELL.

a certain extent, it seems to me clear that the course that the right hon. gentleman is pursuing is really unpatriotic. He is using the resources of this country in order to divert the attention of incoming people, to secure whom we are expending large sums of money, from portions of Canada in which they can add almost at once and enormously to the wealth of the country to other portions in which they would fail to become wealthy or to add to the country's wealth, and to a country in which they would fail to become contented citizens. It is a misfortune when men come here who have connections abroad and who are likely to send back to the friends they have left any expression of opinion that they have injured their prospects by coming to this country. Every consideration would seem to indicate very clearly that, in respect of the bonding privileges in respect of the alleged lack of traffic in the Northwest, in respect of the alleged developing of colonization roads in the less desirable parts of Canada, anything like a fair consideration of the argument must lead one not to the conclusion that the right hon. gentleman has come to, that he should build this transcontinental railway, but that he should do nothing of the kind. I cannot satisfy my own mind that a single one of these arguments is cogent in the direction in which he applied them. To my mind the whole force and effect is in an entirely different direction. Now, having the opinion I have of the enormous capacity and capabilities of our Northwest I should say that nothing that the government could undertake in the way of railway extension in the west could be too great humanly speaking. That a certain railway extension is unnecessary up to this moment is no argument, because, the population is going into that country at a rapid rate. To say that a railway extension will not be needed before ten years is an indication that it is time we were commencing to provide for it. The right hon. gentleman, in the amendments he has introduced to this contract shows that he does not contemplate the completion of the road in the west in less than seven years. It is evident that he thinks that even longer time may be occupied, because we have a provision in the Bill that the company shall not be held by any obligation to complete the road in that time under certain contingencies. So, we may fairly assume that it will be ten years before that work is completed. Therefore, so far as that is concerned, it would seem to me that we should be well in advance of the work of necessary railway building in the more fertile parts of Canada. As to the other parts of the scheme, in so far as the construction of the eastern extension of the road is concerned, I must admit that I am not persuaded nor do I see how it is possible for any public man to persuade the people, or for any citizen of Canada who studies the question