

the country that was less prosperous to the country that was more prosperous. It is true, the rate of customs taxation in the United States is higher than it is in Canada; but the customs duties there relate to articles that form but a very small fraction of the entire consumption of the population, and, in consequence of greater wealth and a more extended market existing in the United States—because you have practically free trade between forty nations—you have greater competition and a lower rate of taxation on the home-produced articles, than you have in Canada. We have here a rate of taxation on the home-produced articles, but little inferior to what is imposed on the articles brought in from abroad. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman said that there was a tendency on the part of the people, both in Canada and the United States, to go from the rural districts into the towns. That is true; but why is it true? Why should the people exhibit a disposition to do this during the past fifteen or twenty years which they did not exhibit during an earlier period? Because, Mr. Speaker, the people of Canada, and the people of the United States alike, have adopted a policy which has tended to drive the rural population into the towns and cities. You have made labour less productive; you have, by the policy you have adopted, made the compensation for labour in the rural districts less than it is in the towns and cities. The result is that you have driven a very large percentage of the rural population into the towns, and these, being unable to find employment in the towns of Canada, have gone across the border into the towns of the United States. That is a necessary consequence of what you have done, and it is because that is the operation of your policy that you will find emigration from Canada into the neighbouring republic to have been larger, since your adoption of that policy, than it was in the previous period. Then the hon. Minister of Finance told us that the people in the New England states were not increasing in numbers any more than they were in Canada. Take that group of states called the North Atlantic Division, and I find that, according to the census of 1880, there were 14,500,000 in round numbers in those states, and according to the census of 1890 there were 17,401,000; and whether these are urban or rural people, the hon. gentleman will see that the percentage of increase is very much greater than in Canada during the same period. Another thing which the hon. gentleman altogether overlooks is the fact that the people who leave the states and go to the west are not lost to the United States, but the people who leave the provinces are, in a great measure, lost to Canada, for they do not go to our western territories, as the people of the United States do to theirs, but by far the greater portion cross the border, and become settlers in the neighbouring republic.

The hon. gentleman overlooks the fact that the fiscal policy which the Government have adopted has tended to bring about that state of things. They have diminished the rural population, they have diminished the profits on labour in the rural districts, they have diminished the cash value of labour, and consequently have driven out of the rural districts a very considerable portion of the population that were otherwise profitably employed. Now, the hon. gentleman has told us that they have failed in part to retain their population because the North-west Territories were not opened earlier. Why, Mr. Speaker, in the most densely populated portion of the province of Ontario, the western counties, there is not one that could not sustain double the rural population it has to-day. The hon. gentleman did not need the North-west to give room for our population. The room exists. There is not a county in the province of Ontario where there is not room for double the rural population it has at this moment, and it is not because the North-west Territories were not open ten years earlier, but because hon. gentlemen opposite have increased the burdens of taxation to such an extent, that people have found it more to their interest to go elsewhere, than to remain within our own borders. I say that the hon. gentleman, instead of undertaking to blindly defend a policy which has proved, after thirteen years' trial, a great failure, ought to admit in all candour that the policy has failed, that it has not produced the results its friends anticipated, and that the Government are prepared to enter upon a more healthy and fairer course in the interests of the people. The hon. gentleman says that we are responsible for the North-west not having been opened sooner. What were the impediments we put in the way of the settlement of the North-west? Does the hon. gentleman mean our opposing the surveying of ten times as much land as was settled, and which surveys have had to be made over again. Is it because we condemned the Government for quarrelling with the half-breed population and producing a civil war? Are the Opposition responsible for that war, the result of the negligence and the incapacity of those who were the former colleagues and associates of the hon. gentleman? Does the hon. gentleman not know that the effect of that rebellion was to seriously retard the settlement of the North-west? Then the hon. gentleman called into existence a large number of colonization societies, and he put into the hands of speculators greedy of gain the settlement of the North-west lands, and those speculators undertook to make fortunes out of the settlers, the strangers whom they desired to take in. They did not succeed, the settlements failed, the speculators made no money, and the lands remained vacant in the hands of the Government. That was the policy of the hon. gentleman. That was his bold, free, liberal, wide, and all other