

scending those of Queen Victoria and her Ministers, since *they* are subject to parliamentary control, whilst the Company is now as absolute in its own dominions as Charles II. wished to be, and as his father tried to be, in theirs, with what result is known. In addition to these dominions the Company has obtained, by Royal License, granted under an act of parliament, which was passed within the last forty years, pretty nearly the same jurisdiction over what are called "the Indian Territories", which are still more extensive than Rupert's Land, the main difference in the tenure being that the license is *terminable*, whereas the chartered *property* of the Company, according to its own reading of its rights, is held in *perpetuity*. Furthermore, about seven years ago, Vancouver's Island, a country about the size of Scotland,—containing fine harbours, most admirably situated as regards the navigation of the Pacific,—possessing a fine climate and fertile soil,—abounding in mines of coal, iron, and the precious metals,—and in every respect adapted to purposes of colonization and trade,—was made over to this same Company. Now, the chartered estate, and the property held on lease, comprise nearly the whole continent of British North America, the principal exception being Canada, which they exceed more than twelve times in extent. Its territory is one third larger than all Europe, covering a space sufficient for the establishment of kingdoms and empires, the whole or nearly the whole of which it has treated as if intended by God and nature for no better purpose than the breeding of wild beasts and vermin, in order that a set of private adventurers might make the greatest possible profit out of the traffic in their skins! More, and worse still, it has kept the native races of man in a state of savage heathenism and ignorance, in order that they might be the better hunters, and the more helpless victims to their exactions. To a monopoly so stupendous, so anomalous, and so pernicious, there is scarcely a parallel to be found in the history of any age or nation, if, indeed, it be not wholly unexampled. That of the China trade by the East India Company, and that of the supply of bread to the British people by British growers only, were striking instances of the way in which the public good may be sacrificed to private interests; but both were morally innocent