

became not the goals, but the starting places for the long race, and a thousand miles beyond them, in the deep interior,

“ The glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd,
And fields, where summer spreads profusion round,
And lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale.”

The very picture which the enraptured poet drew of European civilisation, found its prototype in America, in regions to which his knowledge did not extend, or his imagination bear him. And all this was the result of individual courage, manly enterprise, and self-directed industry.

Thus, in the few years in which the political economists and the philosophers of Europe have, within the present century, been inquiring into the means of preventing or providing for a surplus population—into the best mode of employing men whose labour is not wanted—into the distresses of landlords, and the reason why the poor will not starve in peace and quietness, a population of seven millions has occupied the Western States, where they live in all the enjoyment of present superabundance, and still expanding enterprise. A chairman of an Irish Parish Union, or of a London Colonisation Committee, may ask from what famishing population were the individuals supplied who form those new communities! But he would find that they fled, not from starvation, nor poverty, nor workhouses, but from a country, in his estimation, not yet half-peopled, simply because they would not be servants. They chose to be their own landlords rather than the tenants of others. He may ask what committee of emigration directed the movement?—where did the first emigrants find employment?—what was the rate of wages?—was not the labour market over-supplied when all were labourers and none were masters?—was not the labour market under-supplied, when all were masters, and none would work for hire? He would very speedily find that not one of his questions had entered into the calculations of the emigrant,—that he might as well have asked how they lit their fires without hearth-money, or used the light of heaven without a window tax! If inquiries were made by the emigrating population, they were, whether the land was good or bad—how could they get to it—would it produce food in abundance—and did it offer the promise of future prosperity by its facilities of communication, or its capabilities of improvement? In search of territory where these questions could be satisfactorily answered, the men of the Eastern States abandoned their homes; and for this toil, danger, and difficulty were braved and overcome. Every emigrant was looking for land—land upon which he might live in plenty, and, above all, in independence. From the rolling prairies of Louisiana to the lakes of Canada every mode of transport was put in requisition,—there was the emigrant, with his wife and children packed in a waggon, trundling along where there was no road formed by human hands, shouldering his axe or his rifle, spending his days in toilsome travel, and his nights without shelter; here the steam-boats were crowded with thousands seeking a western home, down the mighty rivers of the interior floated the boats and arks of the settlers, all with one object, *the possession of land*. If they had money, they would buy it cheaply, if not, they would buy it, some on long credit, or