

that he felt that the future of the empire was not to be confined to these islands, but would be extended and brought to a higher measure of greatness through the means of her colonial possessions. Having the remembrance before me of this remark of Lord Derby, I ventured to say, in speaking in Edinburgh, that there were two points in which I thought the colonies might be fairly commended to the attention of their fellow-subjects in this country. One was that they afforded the best field for the surplus labour and capital of this country; and next, that they were the best customers. Now, speaking merely without reference to political considerations, these are two questions that I think will come home to all practical men. If the colonies are a vast field for what you can dispense with, and if they are the best customers for what you produce, then clearly they are the countries with whom you should not merely maintain your connection, but do all in your power to extend it. I must not take advantage of the kindness which you are extending to me this afternoon, and I shall not trespass too long upon your time; but I will venture to ask you to bear with me if I endeavour to some extent to elaborate these two ideas. The first question in connection with the best field for your surplus labour is, evidently, Have you any surplus labour, and do you want any field for it? Now I think that question must be answered by every gentleman now present in the affirmative. There is no doubt—I grieve to say it, but I do not think it can possibly be disputed—there is no doubt in this country an over-population, an overcrowding in the professions. We see the depression in agriculture, but I shall not dwell upon that; we know that there is an overcrowding in the professions, and I shall not dwell upon that. But behind and beyond it all is the presence in our midst of a vast mass of pauperism, a vast body of people who cannot, however willing they may be, get a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. Now, it is to deal with that evil that the colonies offer you an escape; and it is because you have this surplus labour which is depressing the wages of those who are employed, and is burdening the resources of this country with unnecessary weight, that this