

China as elsewhere, and it is there kept in check only by the impossibility of reducing any lower the standard of living. In all European countries, however densely peopled, room and food could still be procured for a much larger number of inhabitants, if those at present in existence would consent to live on lower fare, wear less comfortable clothing, and content themselves with less elaborate and expensive social and political institutions. But such is not the case with China. There the quality of food already in use is such, that a cheaper kind cannot possibly be procured; and when this fails, as it often does in Eastern countries, as it did lately in India, and still more lately in Persia, decimation of the population by famine is the inevitable result. A Chinaman will eat what a European will not touch, and what it is not desirable that he should. The food which would be no more than a necessary of life to the latter, would rank as a luxury with the former; and much the same distinction holds good with regard to everything else which goes to make up the standard of life. We might expect, *a priori*, that China would be over-populated, as in point of fact it actually is—a perfect hive of human beings, swarming with nearly four hundred millions of souls. As a natural consequence of this condition of things, dearths and pestilences are of frequent occurrence, sweeping away vast masses of the people, and creating vacancies which are almost immediately refilled by the unrestrained operation of the law of increase, the only effect of the removal of the pressure being the addition of a temporary impulse to the working of the law, instead of an elevation of the standard of life.

Let a stream of emigration once start from such a country, and what must be the result? Not, as past experience teaches, any amelioration of the condition of those who remain, but simply an opportunity for the more unrestrained operation of the law of increase of population—an opportunity similar to that provided by the sweep of famine or pestilence giving rise to increased mortality. Neither would the condition of the people be benefited, nor longevity increased, though as many were annually removed from the country as would be born, provided the reproductive power of the population were allowed unrestricted exercise. The only result would be to peopple other lands with an immobile, inferior, and, at best, but half civilized race. So sensible are the Chinese themselves of the fact that further increase of population is incom-