

comitant advantages of high rents, large estates, and rich proprietors. I leave it to political economists to say which are the most wealthy—ten thousand slave-holders and slaves, or ten thousand freemen of New York or New England. I leave it to the politician to say which is preferable—the plantation system, which leaves the State so helpless that it has to lean for protection against its own people, upon a hated confederation with abolitionists, and liable to be covered with blood and devastation upon the first tap of a hostile drum which calls the negroes to arms; or the small proprietors' plan of the north, which holds together in strength, peace, and prosperity, a large community, whose political institutions are in themselves so loosely hung as to make it the astonishment of the old world how long they have remained without explosion. I leave it to the philanthropist and the religionist to explain the good or evil tendencies of either system. What I wish to do at present is, to show the relation between property and labour, where land is in abundance, and to convince you that there cannot be cheap labour without slavery in America, where the greater part of a great continent remains vacant, and capable of affording abundant sustenance to the persons who shall occupy a portion of what is unappropriated.

In the United States they receive a foreign population yearly, to the number, of perhaps, 200,000. The official returns of 1846 show 168,000. One-third were, probably, men capable of labour; of these, many are mechanics, who, for the sake of very high wages, settle in the cities and towns on the coast, or in the interior, or are scattered through the country, where they find employment. This employment is often but a transition state between the new emigrant and the landowner. You find the European artisan continually journeying, in the western stream of emigration, to Iowa, Wisconsin, or some other newly-opened territory of the far west. I suppose that many of them suffer temporarily from poverty, but still wages are undiminished. To lower the rate of wages would be to drive all the mechanics, native and foreign, to Oregon, if it were necessary. Then, of the number who arrive, you find a large proportion have crossed the ocean in quest of land; these are agriculturists from the continent of Europe, who do not help to supply the labour market. The great number, with the latter designation, are from my own country, and from these, I believe, most of the domestic servants and labourers for wages are taken. I know of many, very many instances in which Irishmen, who commenced by working for wages as labourers, in the United States, have advanced far beyond that condition—some to respectability—some to wealth. We have here a goodly number who brought into this country their savings from wages, and have become landowners. Probably it may be said that the more energetic and ambitious amongst them emigrate, and become landowners in the west, but many, too many, remain hanging about the cities, inhabiting low and dirty suburbs; keeping shops with two tobacco pipes and a ginger-bread fish for a stock in trade, or doing the work too heavy or too disagreeable for other people; and tens of thousands of them wander about the land, going thousands of miles backwards and forwards, hither and thither in search of a public work. Some canal, dug with