

RAILWAY COLONISATION.

Summary of Evidence on the Colonisation of British North America, in connection with Railroads, taken before a Committee of the House of Lords, with proposals for a practical experiment in Railway Colonisation, calculated to replace the capital invested in Colonial Railways, and in the physical and social preparation of settlements; offering the means of remunerative employment and a road to independence to all classes of British society, and a constant source of revenue to the Imperial and Local Governments.*

"Banks may fail, the wheels of commerce may be clogged, and ruin and devastation may spread around; even land may be temporarily depreciated in value; but LAND cannot be lost—it must, of necessity, remain the most valuable species of property; while time lasts, it will continue to yield food for man and beast. The excess of speculation, and the effects of machinery, are driving men back to the soil; they want, at least, a dependence for food, and, feeling that they are now the victims of those changes which are ever accruing to manufactures, they are seeking for help from LAND."—*From an Address to Benefit Societies on the safest and most profitable Investment of their Funds.*

"That in a country wholly dependent on agricultural produce, daily diminishing in value to the producer from the total decline of a home market consequent upon absenteeism and the ruin of our manufacturers (which render it necessary for him to transport nearly his entire produce, at vast expense and disadvantage, to a foreign country), every security consistent with the rights of property is absolutely necessary to enable the landholders to meet the growing burden upon their diminutive means, especially since the support of the 3,000,000 paupers in Ireland has been thrown upon land."—*Resolution at Tenant Right Meeting in Waterford.*

"It is a remarkable fact that this empire should be distinguished among European nations, at once by possessing the greatest amount of waste territory, and by containing the largest number of unemployed and destitute labourers."—*Spectator.*

"The population of British North America, in 1844, was 1,851,241. Before the close of the present year, nearly 100,000 persons, amounting to a twentieth of the existing population, will have arrived in the St. Lawrence, almost entirely from Ireland. They represent—they carry with them misery and degradation. * * * * After the loss of thousands by the passage, and as many more in hospital sheds, they are forwarded up the river to Toronto, and thence to the upper provinces, still perishing, still scattering disease wherever they go, and entirely dependent for support on the piety and alms of the benevolent. * * * Such is BRITISH COLONISATION under the present system, or, rather, want of system altogether. What else is to be expected than a demoralised and disaffected population, a lost Colony, and an aggrandised rival?"—*Times.*

"It is difficult to understand what natural obstacle prevents such a territory from being occupied, not by individuals, but by societies properly organised for mutual support and assistance, carrying with them, as they advance, all the means and appliances of civilisation."—*Earl Grey to Lord Elgin.*

A GRAND congeries of railways, as a practical project, was some years ago submitted to the Imperial Government and the Local Legislatures of

* Brought from the Lords, 23rd July, 1847. Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Colonisation from Ireland together with the Minutes of Evidence. Session, 1847. Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. No. 737.