

guarantee against this danger. Is the greatness of the field, also, which we have suggested in the present paper, beyond all practical expediency? In answer to this, there cannot be danger of extending our language, our laws, and our civilisation too widely in the earth, provided we at the same time take care that the benefits of all our institutions at home keep equal pace with it. In imitation, then, of some of the nations of old (Tyre, for instance, and Egypt) the more our Colonies multiply abroad, so much the more, we contend, are we strengthened in our native land.

The gross numbers of Great Britain have of late been rapidly on the increase. How, except by colonising the waste places of the earth over which we have jurisdiction, are we to employ or to feed the increasing masses of our labouring population? This is no fancied chimera, it is a question of sober calculation and grave import.

It may be said that the gigantic schemes of railway operations still afloat throughout our land will furnish, for some years to come, employment for the otherwise idle part of our population. But supposing this to be true in a greater degree than it really is, what is to be done when all these works cease (as cease they will), supposing our numbers are still progressive, and our commerce—furnishing means for their support—only stationary?

It was computed by a writer at the close of 1846, and one apparently well versed in railway statistics, that there were at that time in progress and sanctioned by the British Parliament, 5,800 miles of railway lines, to complete which, and bring them into operation, will absorb at least two hundred millions sterling. Five years is the limit which, under ordinary circumstances, is assigned for the completion of these very extensive undertakings, thus abstracting every year, for this period, from the profits of British capital or the sinews of British industry forty millions sterling! Whether this enormous outlay of capital in order to promote expeditious travelling and the transit of goods, will tend in an adequate degree to enhance the aggregate wealth of Great Britain, is a financial question perhaps not much connected with the statistics of its Colonisation. If, however, the capitalists of England shall at length find that they have committed a flagrant error in locking up so much of their wealth in these investments, that will only render it the more imperative that fresh sources of wealth should be created.

Our position, then, is, that the noble territory of Australia, if properly nursed and appropriated, would furnish these sources. But in order to do so, our Colonies, there, must be made the arenas for free men, not the receptacles of convicts. It has frequently been said that convicts are necessary to clear the ground and perform all the drudgery of a new settlement. But if it be so, (which, however, is not proved,) there can be no hesitation on the subject of the wretched policy of this country which dictated our conduct towards Sydney and Van Diemen's Land. Swamped by annual importations of criminals from the Mother Country, could it be expected that her Colonies should thrive and become prosperous whilst peopled with such materials? The very means by which she sought to relieve her dungeons and gaols retarded, in a corresponding degree, the