

testable that there is scarcely a civilized nation whose ambition or jealousy or economical policy does not prompt it to desire to use as little as possible British manufactures. Great Britain has, with equal liberality, preached and practiced free trade, but it is to be doubted if she has gained two nations to her opinions. In each country a few advanced men adopt free-trade principles, and very much they are glorified in return in English publications. But the nations themselves do not yield, and perhaps, if the governments stated exactly what they thought, they would say that they know what suits their respective countries better than the English who so kindly volunteer their advice. England's foreign trade is falling off, and is likely to continue to do so, because she is dealing with unwilling customers. In the colonies she may be sure of constantly increasing trade and willing customers.

A very interesting paper on the colonies was read by Mr. Archibald Hamilton in 1872 before the Statistical Society, in which he specially set himself to show that the trade followed the flag. He adduced the instance of the conquered colonies. For example, the French Canadians, who have never been absorbed into the British colonial population, consume a very small proportion of French compared with British goods, without the latter enjoying any protection. The Dutch population at the Cape affords a similar example, whilst conversely the trade of Java is essentially Dutch. Mr. Hamilton gives some interesting figures as to the consumption of British products per head of population in British possessions and in foreign countries. He takes the average of three years, viz., the year of census with the preceding and succeeding years. The consumption of the North American colonies was 1*l.* 5*s.* 8*d.* per head; Australia and New Zealand, 8*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.*; Cape and Natal, total population 2*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.*, white 8*l.* 12*s.* 2*d.*; West Indies, 2*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.*; Mauritius, 1*l.* 14*s.* 7*d.*; United States, 17*s.* 10*d.*; France, 6*s.*; Spain, 2*s.* 1*d.*; Portugal, 10*s.* 4*d.*; Germany (Prussia, Hamburg, and Austria), 6*s.* 11*d.*; Italy, 4*s.* 3*d.*; Russia, 1*l.*; Holland, 2*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.*, a portion of which probably belongs to Germany; Belgium, 1*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.*; and Brazil, 1*l.* 2*d.* Mr. Forster, three years later, pursued the same subject at Edinburgh. He said:

'I must ask you to look into the facts for yourselves, and if you do so I think you will incline to believe that the balance of evidence shows that the trade does follow the flag. Remember, all that is required to justify that opinion is to have ground to believe that we have more trade with the colonies than we should if they were foreigners. Take these figures. We find by the parliamentary returns that our exports last year were in value to

Australia (including New Zealand)	more than	20,000,000
France	less than	30,000,000
British North America	more than	10,000,000
The United States	less than	33,000,000
The Cape and Natal	about	4,700,000
China	less than	5,000,000

He went on to point out that the seven millions of colonists are not bad customers. 'Our import from them is about 11 per cent., and our export to them about 12½ per cent., of our import and export to and from all foreign countries.'

An important point, to which Mr. Hamilton calls attention, should be remembered. The British trade with the colonies is not represented only by British exports and imports. There is a great deal of indirect trade under British auspices. The colonies draw supplies from all parts of the world. In a majority of cases these are paid for by British exports to the supplying countries. The whole course of colonial trade is in connection with British houses and British joint-stock companies. Let the colonies cease to be British, and we may be certain that, to whatever extent they are able, they will endeavour to divest their trade of its British character.

The colonies already absorb large amounts of British capital, and would absorb much more if it were understood the union was to continue. Doubts as to the colonies separating from the mother-country alone stand in the way of large investments. The *Times* recently published a return of the sums owing by certain defaulting States for principal and interest, by which it appears that no less an amount than 335,000,000*l.* is due to credulous England, of which she is likely to recover very little. With consummate irony the *Times* headed the paragraph, 'English Charities Abroad.' Whilst the colonies continue to belong to Great Britain, it is scarcely possible for them to default. The interest and principal of their public debts are made first charges on their whole yearly revenues. The governor, the government, and the audit department would be guilty