

in 1844. The whole expenditure by Great Britain, in 1843-44, on account of this colony, was £92,000; I should think that it costs somewhat more at present, for we have about 2,000 troops at the Mauritius, and we are going to improve the defences of the island, at the estimated cost of £150,000. Where is the necessity for keeping this amount of military force at the Mauritius? Is it in order to keep down the planters? It is true they are discontented and overburdened by taxation; but the best plan would be to bestow upon them free institutions, and to give them complete control over their expenditure; then a thousand men (which was about the amount of the military force in that colony in 1826) would be an ample garrison.

From the Mauritius I should proceed to Hong Kong; but first, I will stop for a moment at Ceylon. As Ceylon is neither a military station nor a colony, properly so called, but is a subjugated territory of the same kind as our possessions in India, it appears to me that it would be better governed by the East India Company than by the Colonial-office, in which case we should have nothing to pay for the troops in that island. In 1843-4 the military expenditure by Great Britain amounted to £110,000, in addition to a military expenditure by the colony of nearly £70,000. At present the military force in Ceylon consists of 4,000 troops, including colonial corps. Now, £110,000 a year is a heavy price to pay for a colony, the declared value of our exports to which did not exceed £240,000 in 1844: it is true, however, that the import trade from Ceylon, especially of coffee, is rapidly increasing in value.

I now arrive at Hong Kong. From the 1st of May, 1841, when we took possession of that island, up to the 30th September, 1846, we have expended upon it £314,000, exclusive of the sums derived from the local revenue. I find in the Navy, Ordnance, Commissariat, and Miscellaneous Estimates for this year, that Hong Kong appears under sixteen different heads, for sums amounting in all to £94,514; to which must be added the expense of paying, clothing, &c., of 1,200 troops, which must amount to at least £40,000 a year. Therefore Hong Kong bids fair to be a costly colony, as, indeed, it ought to be, when the salary of the governor is £6,000 a year. As the East India Company has a fleet of its own to defend its own possessions, the greater portion of this expenditure is on account of the trade with China, which, on the average of the last four years, did not exceed £2,000,000 a year in British produce and manufactures.

Next, I have to inform the House that Labuan appears this year for the first time in our estimates (Mr. Hume: "Ha, ha," laughter), as yet only in the miscellaneous estimates for the sum of £9,827, £2,000 of which is the salary of his Excellency the Rajah Brooke, of Sarawak (Mr. Hume: "Ha, ha," laughter), to whose dominions in Borneo we have this year appointed a consul at the salary of £500 a year. Now, as in