

MEMORIAL

BY THE

COMMITTEE of INHABITANTS of the CITY of EDINBURGH,
appointed to raise Funds for alleviating the Distress of the Honest and
Industrious UNEMPLOYED TRADESMEN and LABOURERS,

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD STANLEY,

HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

The COMMITTEE of the INHABITANTS of EDINBURGH charged with the Subscriptions for the UNEMPLOYED POOR, beg to represent to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, that they are at present employing, by a fund raised by Voluntary Subscriptions, upwards of 1200 men, all of them more than three years resident in Edinburgh, who have families, to the the extent of about 5000 more individuals dependent on them, and a majority of whom have been supported by this charitable fund since April last, at wages never exceeding 10d., and generally only 6d. per day. The conduct of these men has been uniformly good, but there are many other men partially employed, or not three years resident, also in quest of work; and there is no prospect of such employment in this city or neighbourhood as can relieve the charitable inhabitants of Edinburgh of any considerable portion of the burden which, in one way or other, the presence of so many Unemployed Labourers imposes. At the same time the other claims on those charitable inhabitants are so numerous and pressing, that it is impossible to look forward to their being longer provided for in the same way as at present.

The information which this Committee has received from various quarters, induces them to believe that many of these men, if transported to Canada, would very soon find employment there,—be relieved from their present state of distress—and add greatly to the wealth and resources of that Colony.

The Committee are aware of the objections stated against Government lending assistance to Emigration to the Colonies, but all these objections appear to them to rest fundamentally on the assumption that the present amount of annual emigration “appears to be amply sufficient for the wants of the Colony,” and that there is no capital there for the employment of more.

The Committee earnestly request that the grounds of this opinion may be reconsidered; for they are positively assured, and have information from various quarters inducing them to believe, what was stated by Mr Justice Hagerman in his evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, nearly two years ago—that occupiers of land, particularly in Upper Canada, and probably in other Colonies, are able and willing to employ many more labourers than annually emigrate thither, although they have not capital, and cannot easily enter into arrangements for conveying labourers there from this country,—particularly as they have no certainty of being able subsequently to command their services.