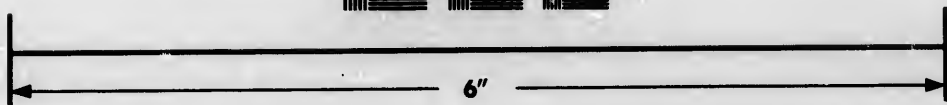
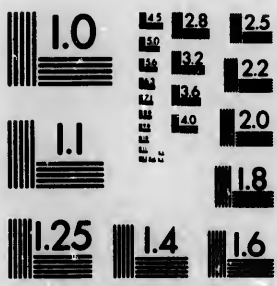


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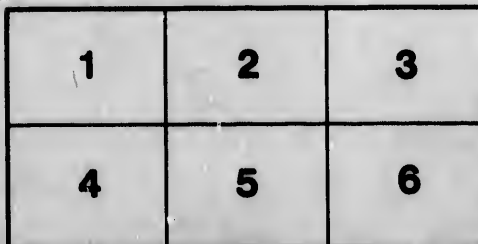
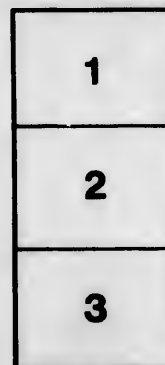
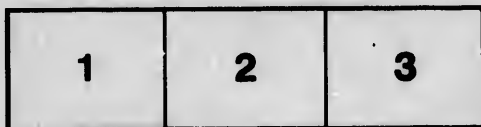
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**OBSERVATIONS.**

ON THE

**SPEECH**

OF

**SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH, BART., M.P.**

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON

**TUESDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 1848,**

ON

**COLONIAL EXPENDITURE**

AND

**GOVERNMENT,**

BY

**J. T. DANSON,**

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

LONDON:

**JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.**

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## P R E F A T O R Y .

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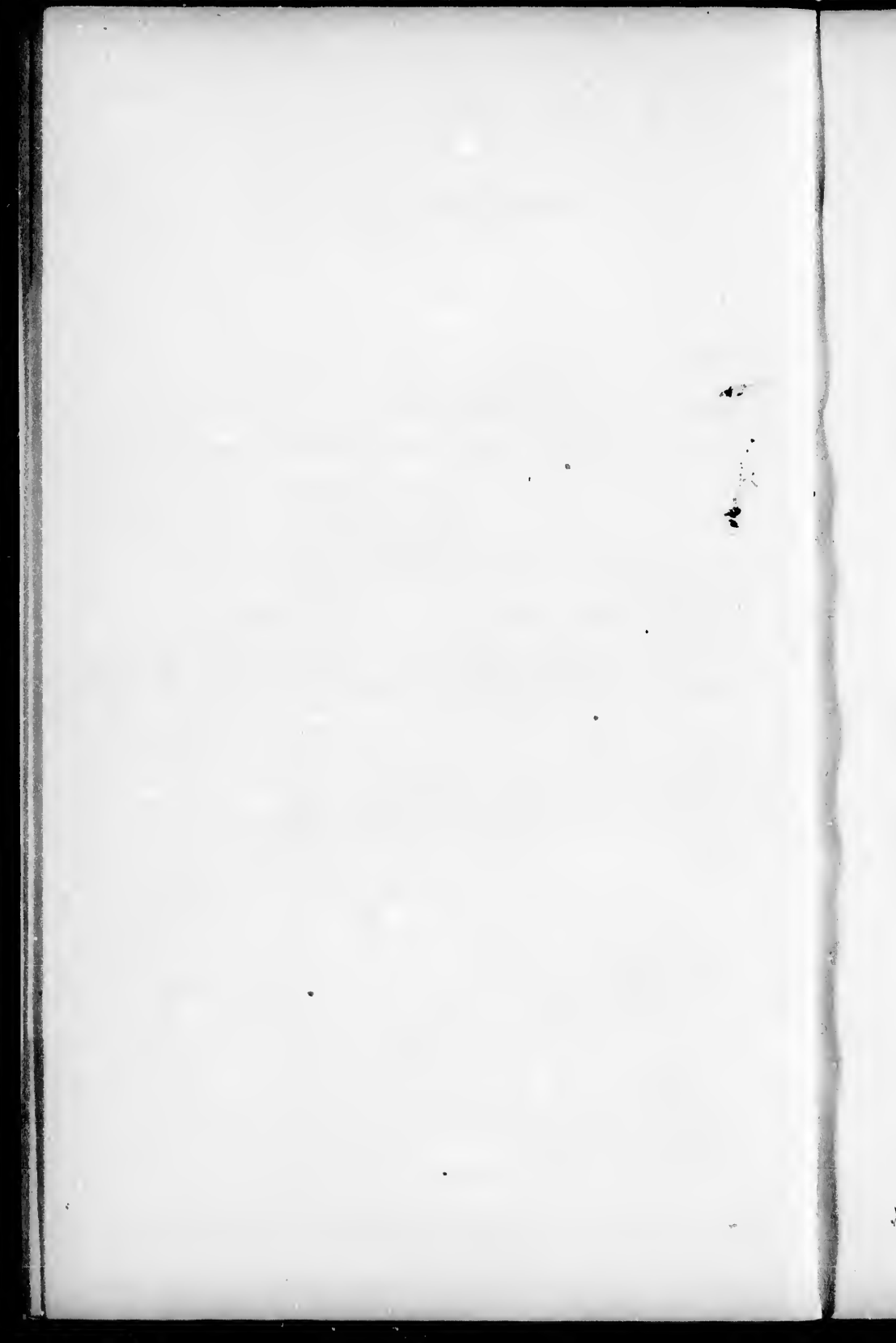
WHILE admiring the ability displayed in the Speech of Sir W. MOLESWORTH, I was also struck with the inaccuracy and incompleteness of many of his statements of fact. To those who feel interested in the prosperity of our Colonies I venture to offer the following observations as an attempt to render somewhat more perfect the case there presented for their consideration. Having been written in the intervals of more pressing business, their appearance has been delayed somewhat longer than I wished. Fortunately, however, the subject is one the interest of which is not affected by the lapse of a few weeks.

J. T. D.

*Reform Club,*

*11th Sept. 1848.*





## OBSERVATIONS, &c.

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The propositions Sir William Molesworth sets out to prove are—

“ First, that the colonial expenditure can be diminished without detriment to the interests of the empire.

“ Secondly, that the system of colonial policy and government can be so amended as to insure more economical and altogether better government for the colonies.

“ And, lastly, that by these reforms the resources of the colonies would be developed, they would become more useful, and their inhabitants more attached to the British empire.”

The Resolution in which he embodied these propositions for the adoption of the House of Commons runs thus :—

“ That it is the opinion of this house that the colonial expenditure of the British empire demands enquiry, with a view to its reduction; and that to accomplish this reduction, and to secure greater contentment and prosperity to the colonists, they ought to be invested with large powers for the administration of their local affairs.”

And, as means to the ends here indicated, Sir William proposes—first,

“ to withdraw our military protection from the Ionian States, to dispense with our stations and fleet on the west coast of Africa, to reduce our establishments at the Cape and the Mauritius, and to bestow upon those colonies free institutions; to transfer Ceylon to the East India Company, to keep a sharp watch over the expenditure for Hong Kong, Labuan, and Sarawak, and to acknowledge the claim of Buenos Ayres to the Falkland Islands.”

And secondly,

“ to delegate to the colonies all powers of local legislation and administration which are now possessed by the Colonial Office, with the reservation only of those powers, the exercise of which would be absolutely inconsistent with the sovereignty of this country, or might be directly injurious to the interests of the whole empire.”

As Mr. Hawes, in answering the honorable baronet, on behalf of the Colonial Department, is reported to have declared that “ he had not the least objection to the motion,

which only carried out that course of policy which he had endeavoured to describe [namely, that already in operation under the present government]; and that, in his opinion, the passing of the resolution would strengthen the hands of his noble friend (the Secretary for the Colonies), and enable him to proceed still further in the prosecution of the views which he entertained,"—it is to be inferred that, as regards the principles of colonial government, Sir W. Molesworth and the present occupants of the Colonial Office are agreed. The real difference of opinion between them would seem to be as to the policy of having any colonies at all; though Sir William, by repeatedly protesting that he would retain the colonies, while recommending practical measures inconsistent with the only sound reasons for retaining them, has probably rendered this difference anything but apparent to the majority of his readers.

As not unusually happens when gentlemen entertaining very strong opinions propose resolutions lowered down to what they think the House of Commons may be persuaded to adopt, the arguments of Sir W. Molesworth will be found to lead to conclusions different from those expressed in the terms of his motion. And as all I have to say will be directed to the former, it may be advisable to begin with stating what I conceive these to be. They appear then, to be two. 1. That our colonies cost more than they are worth; and 2. That they would cost less, yet be more beneficial to the mother country, if we were to abandon some, and let the rest govern themselves. The first is clearly stated and may be readily examined. The second it may be more difficult to come to any definite conclusion upon; seeing that it is encumbered with various limitations which, when applied, leave some doubt as to what is meant. As to the first—

After describing, generally, the nature and extent of our colonies\*, Sir W. Molesworth states that

“the whole colonial expenditure of the British empire is about

\* “The colonial empire of Great Britain contains between four and five millions of square miles, an area equal to the whole of Europe and British India added together. Of this vast space about one million of square miles have been divided into forty different colonies, each with a separate govern-

£8,000,000 sterling a year, one half of which is defrayed by the colonies, and one half by Great Britain ;"—' Speech,' p. 4.

and then proceeds to shew how the £4,000,000 assumed to be paid from the British treasury is made up. And first, as to the military expenditure:—

“ The net military expenditure by Great Britain on account of the colonies (including ordnance and commissariat expenditure) was returned to Parliament for the year 1832 at £1,761,505, for the year 1835-6 at £2,030,059, and for the year 1843-4 (the last return) at £2,556,919, an increase between 1832 and 1843 of £795,414. The present military expenditure is probably about the same as it was in 1843-4. \* \* \* \* It is evident, therefore, that I shall under estimate the military expenditure by Great Britain on account of the colonies when I set it down at only £2,500,000 a year.”

There are here two points raised: one concerning the amount of the present military expenditure; and the other its increase between 1832 and 1843-4. It will be most convenient, and will probably best conduce to a clear understanding of the subject, to consider the latter separately.

According to the returns referred to,\* the net military expen-

ment: four of them are in Europe, five in North America, fifteen in the West Indies, three in South America, five in Africa and its vicinity, three among the Asiatic islands, and five in Australia and New Zealand. The population of these colonies does not exceed five millions: of this number about 2,500,000 are of European race, of whom about 500,000 are French, about 350,000 Ionians and Maltese, a few are Dutch or Spaniards, and the remainder, amounting to about 1,600,000, are of English, Irish, or Scotch descent. Of the 2,500,000 inhabitants of the Colonies who are not of European race, about 1,400,000 are Cingalese and other inhabitants of Ceylon, and 1,100,000 are of African origin.”

It will here be observed that Sir William excludes from the discussion of the present system of colonial policy and government the territories which are governed by the East India Company. To one who desires only a thorough reform of that system, the ground of the exclusion is not very clear. It keeps from view fully one-half of our colonial dependencies, if we measure these only by the extent of territory possessed;—and if we regard the population under our rule, it passes over about nineteen parts to discuss the twentieth. As a matter of Parliamentary practice, it may be justified by reference to the fact that circumstances have placed the excluded dependencies under the management of a different branch of the Home Government. Any such plea as this, however, suggests a doubt whether Sir William has, in assuming the character of a colonial reformer, taken a sufficiently wide view of his work.

\* Commons, Scss: 1825, No. 374; Sess: 1840, No. 632; and Sess: 1846, No. 680.

diture for the colonies in 1832 amounted to £1,791,569, and in 1843-4 to £2,556,919 : showing an increase of £765,350. On comparing the accounts, it appears that the increase arose almost wholly in Canada, the Cape of Good Hope, and the penal settlements in New South Wales, and Van Dieman's Land,\* as follows :

NET MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

	1832.	1843-4.
Canada . . . . .	£208,248	525,226
Cape of Good Hope ..	99,928	294,781
New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land } }	90,339	189,005
	398,515	1,009,012

Difference.. £610,497

As to Canada, the insurrection being then entirely over, it is clear that the additional force of 1843-4 must have been retained not for an internal but for an external purpose. And if it be remembered that it was not till the autumn of 1842 that the north-eastern boundary dispute was settled with the United States, by Lord Ashburton's treaty, and that very soon afterwards the Oregon question was raised, and was not disposed of till after the period in view, or without raising apprehensions of war in the course of its discussion, this purpose becomes apparent.

As to the causes of the increased military expenditure at the Cape, the Parliamentary papers now and formerly published plainly indicate them. The history of the Cape colony since the date of its final capture (1806), displays many causes of increased expenditure, operating, in some degree before, but most strongly during the interval in view, and arising from the nature of the country, and the character and occupations of its inhabitants.†

\* It will be observed that the accounts here referred to come down only to March 1844; and do not, therefore, include the cost of the recent military operations in New Zealand.

† In 1807, immediately after the Earl of Caledon assumed the Governor-

Ever since our occupation of this colony we have had occasion to interfere in protection of the coloured population, who have very generally been treated, particularly by the rude Dutch boers, or farmers of the interior, with a degree of harshness often deepening into downright cruelty. In 1829, by a British order in council, the blacks were placed upon the same footing, in respect of civil rights, as the other inhabitants of the colony. But this made very little real change in their condition. Their social degradation, having its origin in a marked inferiority of race, is not to be counteracted by our interposition. All that British humanity can do for them is to prevent their being rapidly exterminated by ill-usage. By the abolition of slavery, however, the Dutch boers were discontented and alienated. They migrated farther and farther from the authority and superintendence of the government. Their well-stocked farms, planted on the verge of the colony, became objects of envy to the Kaffir tribes; and their savage methods of enforcing redress for robbery or injury the deep-felt sources of revengeful retaliation. English settlers took the same course, and drove their flocks and herds into dangerous proximity to their envious and irritated neighbours; and when conflicts took place, the force at the command of the Colonial Government, at all times inadequate, was also far from the scene of action. It is to be remembered too, (the fact is adverted to by Sir W. Molesworth, but in terms too sweeping to be quite just), that there has always been a section of the colonial population selfishly inclined to favor a war, because they thrive by it. Nor must we forget an element of discord contributed by the errors of the Missionaries, who have not always acted wisely in their well-meant efforts to promote peace. Hence the frequent hostilities with

ship, the total population, of all classes, amounted to 73,663. According to the Cape register of 1838, the number had increased to 156,616, spread very unequally, but, of course, for the most part, very thinly, over an area of nearly 130,000 square miles; and engaged principally in pastoral occupations. Of these, 51,563 were blacks—Hottentots and Kaffirs—but chiefly the former; the majority of the whites being of Dutch origin. In 1845 the population appears to have been 166,060.

the Kaffirs of late years, ending in the recent war; and the consequent increase of military expenditure.

Whatever may have been the errors of the policy formerly pursued with regard to the difficulties thus encountered on the eastern frontier, they are now in the course of being permanently corrected. From the papers lately laid before Parliament I conclude that a more definite and settled boundary is determined upon, as a necessary preliminary to a better system. For Lord Grey and Sir H. Smith, have a system—be it right or wrong; and thus, as compared with their predecessors, have at least one additional chance of success. The question of British authority is now settled, once for all. The construction of good main roads through the heart of the Kaffir territory, and the establishment of military stations at chosen points in British Kaffraria, maintained by settlers holding their land by a military tenure, afford a reasonable prospect of comparative peace for the future, and of the gradual subjugation and civilization of the rude pastoral tribes occupying the surrounding country.\* And the whole expense of maintaining the new plan of defence in operation is to be paid from colonial funds: the rule having now been clearly laid down, that if the colonists think fit to occupy a territory closely bordering upon savage tribes, they must themselves defray the cost of their protection.† Accordingly, a large reduction of the force at the Cape has already been effected. One of the last despatches received from the Governor (dated 18th March, 1848), encloses a return of nearly 1,500 cavalry and infantry embarked for England since January; and also states that the utility of the newly-organized Kaffir police was indisputable, and “met his most sanguine expectation.”‡ In short, the policy adopted by Lord Grey at the Cape, and fully described in papers laid upon the table of the House of

\* See Cape Correspondence, July 1848, pp. 29, 67, 80; and the plan annexed.

† See Lord Grey's dispatch to Sir H. Smith of March 31, 1848, in the Cape Correspondence presented to Parliament in July. (p. 30.)

‡ Cape Correspondence, July 1848, p. 69.

Commons, some time before the delivery of Sir W. Molesworth's speech, may be said to be all but identical with that which Sir William takes credit for recommending.—Vide Speech, p. 12.

The Cape Colony may not be worth holding, even on the better terms thus in prospect. But whilst British subjects are encouraged to emigrate and settle where land is cheap and fertile, and a native population within reach—every extension of the colony necessarily involving danger of occasional aggression from savage tribes compelled to retire or change their habits—it is hardly necessary to observe that they must be protected. At the same time, as experience abundantly proves, unless the native population is to be left to the mercy of the border settlers, there will also be frequent need for the presence of some superior authority to enforce the commonest dictates of justice and humanity. In short, it may be affirmed with confidence, that it is impossible to provide large fields for emigration upon any system of colonization suited to modern wants, without expenditure and a superintending government. Without these a repetition of the dreadful vicissitudes and disasters endured by our countrymen in their first attempts at colonization can scarcely in any instance be averted.\* And it must be held to diminish in no small degree the value of Sir W. Molesworth's speech, that we find there no reference to these necessities of modern colonization, but on the contrary, many indications of their being either unknown to, (which we can scarcely suppose) or wholly disregarded by him.

With regard to the increase of military expenditure between 1832 and 1843-4, in the penal settlements, it is to be observed, that during, and for some time after, the expiration of the period in question, these settlements were, in their uses, rather imperial than colonial—serving, as they did, not so much any scheme, wise or unwise, of colonial aggrandisement, as an imperial method of dealing with crime engendered in the United Kingdom.

\* See Grahame's History of the United States, Vol. I.



The remainder of the increase of military expenditure in the colonies between 1832 and 1843-4, appears to have arisen chiefly from new establishments at Hong Kong, (under the China treaty of 1842,) at St. Helena, (transferred from the East India Company to the crown on the last renewal of their charter in 1833,) on the West Coast of Africa, (in connexion with our effort to suppress the slave trade,) and at the Falkland Islands, of which we resumed possession in the interval—but here the only military expenditure has been for a few military men employed on some public works. There was also an increase of the force maintained at Gibraltar, and at Bermuda.

Returning to the consideration of the *present* military expenditure in connection with the colonies—it would appear that, granting the correctness of the estimate offered by Sir W. Molesworth of its gross amount, it does not follow that the whole is to be charged to the colonial system. The outlay made for the penal settlements has already been adverted to. And there is another deduction to be made for the force maintained in military and maritime stations, which, as Sir W. Molesworth observes, are not properly termed colonies, being held for purposes wholly apart from colonization. According to the official returns already referred to, the military expenditure of 1843-4 was distributed as under:—

Military and Maritime stations . . . .	£952,934
Penal settlements . . . . .	189,005
	<u>1,141,939</u>
The remaining settlements . . . . .	1,367,087
	<u>£2,509,026</u>

There was also, in the same year, a sum of £48,941 for “general charges,” which, if distributed proportionately, would make the expenditure on the colonies, properly so called, about £1,396,000, and on the rest about £1,160,000. But though the classification thus attempted, and of the propriety of which Sir W. Molesworth seems to have no doubt, can hardly be too strongly insisted upon, especially with

reference to general projects of colonial reform, it is not possible to establish the distinctions suggested very clearly in practice. Two of those properly classed as maritime stations—the Cape of Good Hope and the Mauritius—may also, in strictness, be termed colonies; while several of those not included in the list of such stations do, in fact, to some extent, afford similar facilities for the employment of our military and naval forces abroad, in the service of the mother country. If, however, it be assumed that of the aggregate military expenditure, in the year referred to, on the Cape and the Mauritius (£381,812) one-half was incurred for colonial purposes solely; and if, on the other hand, no allowance whatever be made for the cost of military or maritime stations, not colonial, in the colonies properly so called; it appears that about two-fifths (say £1,000,000 out of £2,500,000) of the military expenditure was, in that year, incurred for the military and naval stations and penal settlements alone. And this makes partially apparent the ground upon which I venture to estimate Sir W. Molesworth's main proposition—to diminish our colonial expenditure by giving to the colonies in which it is to take place larger powers of local legislation and administration—at a value somewhat lower than that which the logical necessities of his argument plainly require. I doubt whether the method of economising thus proposed is applicable to nearly the extent Sir W. Molesworth assumes it is. But this part of the subject will be best dealt with in the sequel. At present I confine myself to the amount of the expenditure, and the question how far it can truly be considered colonial.

Proceeding to the *naval* expenditure, Sir W. Molesworth, after stating that “we have about 235 ships in commission, with a complement not much short of 40,000 men,” and that “of these ships about 132, with a complement of about 25,000 men, are on foreign stations—some in the Mediterranean, some on the North American and West Indian station, some off the west coast of Africa and the Cape of Good Hope, others in the Chinese and Indian seas, or protecting our interests in New Zealand,” assumes, “that at least *one-third* of the

ships on foreign stations—that is, one-fifth of the ships in commission—or 45 ships, with a complement of about 8,000 men, are maintained on account of the colonies,” and that these with the incidental charges for naval establishments in the colonies, freight, and other matters “will give a total of above a million sterling as the direct naval expenditure by Great Britain on account of the colonies for one year.”

The official returns give £74,005 only, as the amount of the naval expenditure incurred by Great Britain on account of the Colonies in 1843-4; but this includes only the expenditure incurred on shore in the Colonies. The estimate offered by Sir W. Molesworth is possibly nearer the truth; but before we can feel any confidence that it is so, we must be assured of the accuracy of the method by which it is obtained. Of this, however, Sir William affords us no information; unless, indeed, his having heard “the extent of our colonial empire, and the new colonies which are springing up in Australia, New Zealand, and the Chinese and Indian Seas” often referred to in the discussion of the navy estimates, can be accepted as a reason for taking the proportion of “one-third” in preference to one-fourth or one-half.

The Report (lately published) of the Committee appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into and report upon the army, navy, and ordnance estimates of the present year (and of which committee Sir W. Molesworth appears to have been an active member) contains a tabular statement, whence Sir William would seem to have gleaned the facts above stated, followed by some particular remarks upon the local distribution and uses of our naval force, at home and abroad; and these latter tend to shew that Sir W. Molesworth has greatly over-estimated the force applied to colonial purposes.

After a careful examination of the reasons adduced by the Committee for maintaining each of the seven foreign stations enumerated,\* with reference to the force required for colonial

\* 1. East Indies and China. 2. Pacific, or West Coast of America. 3. East Coast of South America. 4. West Coast of Africa. 5. Cape of Good Hope. 6. North America and West Indies. 7. Mediterranean.

purposes, and which would not be required were they to become independent,—and of course here regarding as “colonies” only such of our dependencies as are, in the abstract at least, capable of independence, therefore excluding all the mere military or maritime stations—I find that

Of the seventeen vessels and 3,268 men on the East India and China station, “Three or four vessels have been stationed at New Zealand;” and “it is thought desirable that these ships should occasionally visit Australia and Van Diemen’s Land;”—and that in the Pacific and on the East Coast of South America there are no vessels employed for colonial purposes.

On the West Coast of Africa there are 24 ships and 2,370 men; but these are employed in the suppression of the Slave Trade, in accordance with treaties made with France and the United States, and cannot be affected by any colonial reform yet projected—Sir W. Molesworth’s proposal merely to withdraw the Slave Trade squadron, affecting much more nearly the moral sentiments of the British people, and our relations with Foreign powers, than any question properly colonial.

At the Cape of Good Hope there are 9 vessels, with a complement of 1,715 men. This station, which includes Mauritius, the committee state to have three uses,—the *Colonial* use which has required an additional force during the Kaffir war,—the *trade-protective* use, of the Indian, Australian, and China trade, about Mauritius and the Cape, and the *Slave trade suppression* use, with reference to an increase of that trade, of late years, on the Eastern Coast of Africa. Here 5 vessels, and 1,000 men, may perhaps fairly be allowed for the colonial demand, apart from the others.

On the North American and West Indian Station, there are 10 vessels, and 1,717 men, employed chiefly in “the protection of the fisheries in the north, visiting the West Indian Islands, and watching British interests from the Caraccas to the shores of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.” Here we may perhaps fairly suppose that at least 4 vessels and 500 men would be required to perform the duties described, putting the colonies out of the question.

In the Mediterranean there are 25 ships, with a complement

of 6,973 men. The committee explain the uses of this fleet as follows:—

“This force is maintained in accordance with the policy of the present government; and Lord Auckland declares it as his opinion, that while we maintain this amount of naval force in time of peace, it may be more conveniently stationed in the Mediterranean than elsewhere.”

With the rival policies of keeping a sufficient navy ready for use, and of waiting till it is actually wanted, the present subject has no concern. It suffices that in the Mediterranean we have three fortified stations, but no colonies—three depôts of military force, devoted to the same uses as the naval, but neither having any reference to colonization.

What, then, by this Report, is the apparent amount of naval force actually in use for colonial purposes? Out of 17 vessels and 3,268 men on the East India station, “three or four vessels” are detached for the Australian Colonies, say four vessels: these manned in the same proportion as the rest, would carry about eight hundred men; but say four vessels and a thousand men. At the Cape, five vessels and a thousand men; and on the North American and West Indian station, six vessels and twelve hundred men; make up a total of 15 vessels and 3,200 men employed in the colonial service,—instead of 45 vessels and 8,000 men, as assumed by Sir W. Molesworth.

This reduces the estimate of the naval expenditure for the colonies by more than one half.

The reduction, it will be observed, is effected by excluding from the list of colonies those which Sir W. Molesworth describes as “military stations acquired chiefly for political purposes,” and which he expressly distinguishes from “colonies properly so-called.” If the exclusion required further justification, it might be found in the fact that Sir William, in balancing the expense of the colonies against the benefits derived from them, takes no account of any benefit derived from these military or maritime stations. In the very slight reference made to their uses these are spoken of as “chiefly political;” and, again, they are “supposed to be useful in periods of war for purposes of aggression.” The advantages attending their possession are, however, scarcely so difficult to discover as is

here assumed. Whether these are sufficiently great to counterbalance their cost is another question. Apart from any object of colonisation, they are obviously two-fold: concerning partly our political relations with foreign powers, and partly the protection of our trade abroad. Into the former, as touching not our colonial but our foreign policy, it were needless to enter here. Suffice it to observe, that while these considerations of policy are allowed to prevail, it is not possible to avoid the resulting outlay. But the latter must be held to fall fairly within the scope of the comparison, instituted by Sir W. Molesworth, of the expenditure upon the colonies with the *commercial* advantages derived from them. If, therefore, the estimate of the naval expenditure be extended beyond the amount above deduced from an examination of the Report of the Finance Committee, it must, in justice, be accompanied by an extension of Sir W. Molesworth's estimate of the benefits they confer upon our trade—which will have to be considered presently.

But Sir W. Molesworth does not consider his statement of the naval expenditure upon the colonies complete without the addition of "a very considerable sum on account of reliefs and building new ships, likewise a portion of the cost of the naval establishments at home, and likewise a portion of the expense of the packet service to the colonies, which last item alone costs £418,000 a year." No definite amount is suggested for any item but the last; and of this we have only the imperial outlay. But there are, I think, reasons apparent why the packet-service to the colonies should, in practice, be considered purely imperial; and also why the cost of it, as it has been, should not be taken as the measure of the burden its continuance will impose on the British Treasury. It seems hardly necessary to observe that the packet-service to the colonies, like the packet-service at home, is a part of the post-office system, which is absolutely necessary to render it complete; but which always has, and probably always will, cost more than the direct returns will pay. The letters carried must be nearly all in the service of

commerce, on the profits of which the postage is a tax. The colonists pay postage upon their letters, as we do upon ours; but the sum of what we both pay in that shape is insufficient to support the packets; and we pay the balance. Were they independent states, the settlement of the bill would become the subject of an international arrangement; but as only one line of packets is needed, and we should need that for our own convenience,\* we could only compel an arrangement more satisfactory to ourselves than that now existing by refusing to carry their letters, except at very high charges. Now many of them would be orders addressed to our merchants. And as it is certain that so far as the correspondence was commercial, our charges would reduce the profits on both sides, precisely in proportion to their amount, it is not probable that we should succeed in making small and distant independent states pay for all the benefit they would derive from our packet-service. The expediency (to say nothing of the practicability) of now using the authority of the home Government to allot and enforce payment of what might be deemed the just share of each colony in the aggregate outlay is certainly anything but apparent.

As to the inference of the future from the recent cost, it is to be borne in mind that the introduction of steam communication in the colonial packet-service was an experiment. No previous knowledge existing as to the outlay actually required, tenders were necessarily invited (and no doubt, also, to some extent, given) at considerable risk. The cost is now known. The revenue from letters is also known; and future arrangements will be made under circumstances admitting of the enforcement of the utmost economy consistent with the due maintenance of the service.

Passing to the next—the civil—branch of colonial expenditure, Sir W. Molesworth states its annual amount as paid by Great Britain, at about £300,000. Upon this it need only be observed, that according to the return so often referred to,\* giving the colonial expenditure for 1843-4, rather more

\* Just as we now need, and maintain, a line of packets to Brazil, Buenos Ayres, and Monte Video, where we have no colonial interest whatever.

than three-fifths of the net civil expenditure was for the penal settlements, to which we may be said to have transferred the most costly of the establishments for the suppression of crime proper to the United Kingdom.

With the addition of £200,000 a year for "extraordinary expenditure" the estimate is then closed; and the sum of £4,000,000 sterling is stated to be the total direct expenditure by Great Britain on account of the colonies.

Having exhibited an account of what the colonies cost us, Sir W. Molesworth proceeds to count the returns, so far as these may be supposed to take a commercial form; and the following is the passage in which these returns are summed up, and the balance struck:—

"Now, I beg the house to observe, that the declared value of British produce and manufactures exported to the colonies in the year 1844 was nine millions sterling, including one million's worth of exports to Gibraltar, which are sent to Gibraltar to be smuggled into Spain. Therefore the expenditure of Great Britain on account of the colonies amounts to nine shillings in every pound's worth of its exports; or, in other words, for every pound's worth of goods that our merchants send to the colonies, the nation pays nine shillings; in fact, a large portion of our colonial trade consists of goods which are sent to defray the expenses of our establishments in the colonies." [Speech p. 6.]

This argument on the commercial value of the colonies is defective in two respects: first, as assuming that the only commercial object in view in retaining our colonies, is the profit gained in our trade with them; and secondly, as offering an incomplete estimate of the value of that trade. To dispose of the latter defect, first: the profit on the colonial trade is obviously not confined to the merchants' profit on the exportation of British produce. We must include his profit on all other exports to the colonies. Then the nine millions sterling referred to is only the declared value of the British produce on leaving our shores. In paying for it the merchant pays the wages of all the labour, and the profits of all the capital, employed up to that period on the raw material of



which they are composed ; and before he sells the goods in the colonies, he also pays the profits of the capital invested in the shipping by which they are conveyed, and the wages of the labour employed in working it. Further, there is the import trade, the profit on some proportion of which must clearly be included, inasmuch as it, like the rest, furnishes gainful employment for British capital and labour.

But the real fallacy of the argument lies deeper. Our colonial expenditure is not made to secure the colonial trade\* only, but partly and chiefly to secure other advantages. The military and maritime stations, for instance, which, as has been shown, absorb a large proportion of the colonial expenditure stated by Sir W. Molesworth, are obviously not held for the sake of the export trade to them, nor even with a view to that only other advantage apparently contemplated by Sir William as derivable from the foreign possessions he enumerates—the facility of outlet for English emigration. They all, to a greater or less extent, serve the purpose of readily displaying, and, should need arise, of exercising, our military or naval power at distant points, as occasion may require. Some undoubtedly are, as Sir W. Molesworth suggests, maintained for political purposes ; others, however, must be regarded as held primarily, if not entirely, with a view to the protection of our trade. And so far as this, and the need for it, can be established, it is clear that the estimate of the commercial advantages derived from our colonial expenditure, above considered, is incomplete.† Upon what ground

\* Sir W. Molesworth says we should retain our present freedom of trade with the colonies, even if they became independent states. Perhaps so : but it may, with some show of reason, be doubted, upon evidence pointed to by Sir William himself. He offers the United States as instances of “ independent colonies” (‘Speech,’ p. 18), and afterwards affirms that “ the rate of consumption of our goods amounts to 8s. a head in the United States, and to £1 12s. a head in our other colonies” (‘Speech,’ p. 36) ; a difference which instantly induces reference to the United States tariff, which imposes, on all the principal descriptions of British goods, import duties of from 30 to 50 per cent. ad valorem.—*Mc Gregor’s Commercial Tariffs—United States,* p. 1128.

States so enlightened and powerful, whose productive aptitudes are obviously not such as to clash with ours under a natural system, acting thus, it cannot be deemed very improbable that others should do the same.

† Incidentally, it is necessary here again to refer to Sir W. Molesworth’s exclusion of India from his review of our colonial policy. Whatever the value

then, can the actual receipt of any such advantage from the possession of our military and maritime stations be affirmed; and, admitting that it is received, what is its probable value?

Most other governments can give adequate protection to the persons and property of their people by securing the repression of violence and the administration of justice within their own borders. But with us it is not so. It is, perhaps, not too much to say that there are constantly residing and labouring abroad, in the service of our commerce, a much larger number of British subjects than are similarly exposed beyond the reach of home protection by all the other nations of the earth put together; and the amount of British property in their custody is, comparatively, still greater. It will scarcely be denied that these persons and their property are entitled to such protection as they need, and as the home government can render. If this be questionable every other civilized nation has hitherto answered the question in the affirmative. Nor is it, in point of fact, possible for us to do otherwise. We certainly never hesitate about the answer when it is directly asked for. Let an Englishman be maltreated, or an English ship or store be plundered, in any port or mart abroad, and who so ready (with an instinctive feeling which I trust never to see weakened) to enforce a demand for instant reparation, and to detect and condemn any apparent want of naval aid at hand, as that public and that parliament to which, for the occasion, Sir W. Molesworth now holds up the provision of a naval force in the localities most likely to furnish such occurrences as proof, in itself, of an unnecessary expenditure of the public money.

To withhold such protection, then, not being possible, how can we best render it—how most effectually and cheaply? By leaving the highways of our shipping as we left the highways near London a century ago, and dealing with every case of depredation as it arises,—by revenging the injury when

to England of the territories held by the East India Company, a great part of it must be commercial. Our tenure of the whole is much dependent upon the facility of our communications; and hence, partly, the value of our footing in the Mediterranean, the cost of which here comes into view.

committed (if we can)—or by so diminishing, constantly, the chances of successful wrong, as to prevent its committal? All experience tends to prove the latter to be the cheaper course, and also the wiser in other respects.

What, then, are the risks to be guarded against? Piracy is now so nearly extinct that, except in the Indian Archipelago, it would be difficult to find half a dozen cases in the last thirty years; and there it is ceasing. It is cast out of account by the underwriter, and has no effect upon the premium of insurance. But during all this time our navy (seldom less strong abroad, in proportion to our trade, than it now is) has been cruising in every sea whitened by the sails of our merchant men. Whether piracy would have been equally uncommon, had the naval protection afforded to our foreign trade been confined to the occasional pursuit of individual rovers, may, I think, be reasonably doubted.\* Here, perhaps, as in one or two other matters, the present generation stands in some danger of mistaking the very efficiency of an institution for evidence that it is not needed. We have learnt to think of pirates by trade in any sea we frequent much as we do of leviers of black mail in the Highlands, or of professional highwaymen on Bagshot Heath—as modern impossibilities; and so indeed we may, and with safety, as long as we maintain the modern means of making them so. But what assurance have we that it would be safe to abandon these?

Granting, however, the use of our maritime stations, and the force maintained there, as subserving the protection of our trade, it is open to observation that the force available, or actually employed, for any such purpose, is least where the trade assumed to be protected is greatest. Sir W. Molesworth has aptly illustrated this point, in observing that “not one ship of war is required to protect our trade with the United States; in fact, a British ship of war is very rarely seen off the coasts of the United States.”† The reason is obvious:—

\* And in support of this doubt I would appeal to the continued existence of piracy, as a trade, in the Mediterranean down to 1816, when the peace threw into our hands, for the first time, the power of absolutely suppressing it.

† I would not be understood to admit the perfect accuracy of this statement. Like many others in the speech before me, it is hardly justified by the facts.

it is not where the amount at stake is greatest, but where the risk of depredation is most intense, that the largest force is required. To form some idea of where unprotected merchantmen would now probably run the greatest risk, or, in other words, of the localities most favorable to piratical adventure, we have but to recur to the time—about the period of the transfer of “the dominion of the seas” from the Dutch to ourselves—when the character of pirate (in time of peace) and privateer under any convenient flag (in time of war) were so blended as to be hardly distinguishable—and when the combined profession was common—when the achievements of Montbar, Lolonois, and Morgan in the West Indies and on the Spanish main, and of Kyd, England, and Avery in the Indian Ocean were the staple themes of nautical romance, and struck terror to the hearts of all sea-carriers and their customers. The Lagoons of South America and the Islands of the Indian Ocean are, in themselves, as fit to become nests of pirates now as ever they were; and how vastly richer and more numerous the freighted prizes passing within swooping distance. Yet with more property exposed, there is also more safety for it—much as it is with Cheapside warehouses, or the Cheviot pastures, in the nineteenth, as compared with the seventeenth century—and its commercial value is proportionately increased. In Chesapeake Bay we are as safe as in the Thames. But from Japan to Madagascar, and thence to New Zealand—a triangular space containing about one-sixth part of the surface of the globe, skirted by the coasts of China and Australia, and dotted with innumerable islands—which embraces the newest, the widest, and the most promising field for the future extension of our export trade, it is in recent memory that we were safe, for the most part, only under the immediate protection of a naval force. And this is the very district to which Sir W. Molesworth draws particular attention [Speech, p. 5.] as requiring and receiving an extraordinary amount of naval force—and that for *colonial* purposes.

But piracy proper is the least destructive of the forms of

depredation to which a trade extended from a small island to all the ends of the earth is liable. When war (still a modern practice) breaks out, our opponents may be said to become, as far as we are concerned, pirates and licensers of pirates.

Take the uses of our position at the Mauritius as an example. The reasons why we hold this as a naval station may be best read in the motives which induced us, at great cost, to take possession of it. As the power of the French declined in the East Indies they clung the more steadfastly to their footing here, and turned it to better account. In the repeated and desperate conflicts between the squadrons of Admirals Hughes and Suffrein, during the American war, the support derived by the latter from the opportunity thus afforded him of victualling and refitting his fleet, and of dividing the strength of his opponent by maintaining numerous privateers, and so rendering the detachment of vessels for convoy absolutely necessary to the safety of our homeward-bound Indiamen, constantly turned the scale in favour of the French, besides causing enormous losses to our merchants and ship-owners.\*

In the war of 1793-1802, the French squadron sent to the Mauritius in 1794, under Vice-Admiral Sercy, aided by privateers fitted out from the island, again made prey of our Indian trade. At the peace of Amiens, it being agreed that Pondicherry should be restored to the French, Admiral Linois went out to take possession; but not obtaining it before war broke out again, he "immediately set sail for the Eastern Archipelago, attacked the English settlement in Sumatra, captured some richly laden Indiamen, burnt others, and prepared to intercept the China fleet on its passage to England." He did intercept it, but by an act of courage on the part of the commander of the fleet which earned him knighthood and high rewards on his return, was beaten off. After some further exploits, "hearing that the British fleet was in pursuit of him, *he set sail for the Isle of France*, (now Mauritius) after having committed great depredations on the commerce of the East India Company. Having completed

\* Pridham's "Mauritius and its Dependencies."—1846.—p. 54.

his repairs, he took advantage of the departure of the British fleet under Admiral Rainier, for sailing on another cruise, "in which he was more successful in the acquisition of wealth than of honour." How the annoyance became unbearable, and so brought about the expedition which ended in the capture of the island, is told in the following passage from the work already quoted:—

"The isles of France and Bourbon were now the only relics of French dominion to the east of the Cape of Good Hope. The shelter afforded to shipping, and the resources possessed by the government of these islands for the equipment and victualling of ships of war and privateers, had enabled some of the enterprising French officers to inflict incalculable injury on the commerce of India. The successes of Sercy, Linois, Bergeret, Hamelin, and Duperré, were, in great measure, to be ascribed to the facilities with which they could make good the defects of their ships at Port Louis. The creoles of the island, moreover, who were men of an active and adventurous spirit, delighted in the most perilous of enterprises, and ably seconded the operations of the French fleets by the equipment of a large number of privateers, with which they cruised successfully in the surrounding seas, that became the theatre of most sanguinary conflicts with English vessels and their own. Napoleon, gratified by their bravery and success, directed that the thanks of the nation should be transmitted to them, and, as a further reward, decreed the admission of the produce of the island into France free of duty. In all their enterprises against British commerce, they were materially assisted by a number of reckless American adventurers, who infested the whole of our possessions in the east, brought fast-sailing ships to the Isle of France, fitted them out there, met the corsairs at a rendezvous mutually agreed on, gave information of the sailing of all our trade, bought not only the cargoes of the prizes for the American market, but the hulls of the ships to carry back to our own settlements, and there are strong reasons to believe that collusive bargains were entered into in anticipation of the captures made in consequence of such intelligence; in a word this island became a centre for the freebooters of every nation to fit out privateers and commit depredations on English property. In 1809, when the injuries sustained from the enemy had exceeded all bounds, when the East India Company bitterly complained of the loss of their richest vessels on the one hand, and the reclamations of our merchants could no longer be slighted on the other, when our navy, though everywhere triumphant, could not correct the evil, either by a blockade of the island, or by bringing their ships to action, the Indian Government considered the subject as worthy of their attention, and the conquest of the colony was resolved on."

Several attacks upon the island were made without effect ; and it was not till a period of tranquillity in India combined with a fortunate turn of events in Europe to place at Lord Minto's disposal an unusually large force, that it was captured. The last and successful attack appears to have been made with twenty ships of war, mounting upwards of 600 guns, bearing a land force of 15,000 infantry, some cavalry, and a formidable train of artillery, and attended by about fifty East Indiemen and transports. The regular force employed by General Decaen in the defence amounted only to 2,500 men, including sailors.\*

But thirty-eight years have elapsed since the Indian ocean was thus made safe for British merchantmen ; and the present generation of commercial men need to be reminded of the circumstances under which their predecessors traded to the East. Restore matters to their position in 1809, with the addition of steam in the hands of the enemy, and the insurance against the war risk would eat up the merchant's profit twice told. And the same remark applies with more or less force to all our maritime stations.†

But further—if protection be needed, and be not given by the state, it will be otherwise provided. If the English producer of exported goods, and the English consumer of

\* Pridh.m, pp. 75, 126.

† Nor is it applicable to these only, as the following passage from the last edition of Mr. Porter's "Progress of the Nation," referring to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, may serve to show :—

"It can hardly be said that England has hitherto drawn any *positive* advantages from the possession of these provinces, if we place out of view the convenience afforded, during periods of war, by the harbour of Halifax ; but the *negative* advantages from them are evident if we consider that the United States of America are greatly deficient in good harbours on the Atlantic coast, while Nova Scotia possesses, in addition to the magnificent harbour of Halifax, eleven ports between it and Cape Canso, with sufficient depth of water for the largest ships of war, besides fourteen other harbours capable of receiving merchant vessels ; and although New Brunswick is not equally well provided in this respect, its coast furnishes several safe and capacious harbours, including those of St. John and Miramichi, with the further advantage of their greater proximity to Europe. In the unhappy event of a war breaking out between the two countries, the possession of these harbours by America would furnish her with means of annoyance to our commerce from national vessels and privateers, the magnitude of which is hardly calculable."—Porter's "Progress," p. 736.

those imported, were not taxed by the state for ships of war, they would be taxed by the merchant and ship-owner to pay for making trading ships more fit to fight, or run, and so more capable of saving the goods they are now built only to carry ; and, whatever risks were still incurred would undoubtedly be expressed in the rate of insurance, and also added to the price of the goods. Thus, so far as our trade abroad needs protection, even assuming that we are free to give or to withhold it in point of justice to those most nearly concerned, the question, as one of commercial expediency, resolves itself, after all, into the very simple one—whether the want can be most economically supplied by vessels fitted for the purpose, and bearing the flag of the most powerful maritime state in the world, or by each trader being left to take care of himself?

Undoubtedly a large proportion of the cost of maintaining our present military and maritime stations is not necessary for the protection of our trade in time of peace ; and if we could feel sure, with Mr. Cobden, that England will never be at war again, it would be a waste of money to retain the greater number of them. But not having this assurance, and having, on the contrary, some reason for believing that while the points most favourable for aggression upon the weakness of our wide-spread commerce are firmly held in our own hands the chances of our being forced into a war are much diminished, it would seem not altogether unwise to put up with the needful outlay as an annual premium for insurance against the contemplated risks. Of course this does not preclude the most searching enquiry into what outlay is needful ; it is quite consistent with Sir W. Molesworth's proposal to "keep a sharp watch upon the expenditure for Hong Kong, Labuan, and Sarawak" (Speech, p. 15) ; and it might, possibly, consist with the "transfer of Ceylon to the East India Company."\* With regard to "a reduction of our establishments at the Cape of Good Hope and the Mauritius," beyond that already made, it is obvious that if these stations are worth keeping at all, that must be decided by military as well as pecuniary considerations. The

\* But vide post, p. 63.



propriety of retaining the Falkland Islands can only be safely considered on similar grounds. And as to the remaining points in Sir W. Molesworth's proposition touching our military and maritime stations—the "withdrawal of our military protection from the Ionian States," and "dispensing with our stations and fleet on the West Coast of Africa,"—as these concern the fulfilment of treaties with foreign powers—the one having reference solely to our foreign policy on the continent of Europe, and the other to the suppression of the slave trade, objects neither of them forming any part of our "colonial system,"—it is not necessary to notice them here.

By way of closing this review of the commercial advantages derived from our colonial possessions, apart from the profits of our trade with them, we may also notice the facilities they afford for extending the field of employment for British capital and labour by emigration—an advantage which cannot be described better than it has been by Sir W. Molesworth himself.—[Speech p. 36.]

I think I have satisfactorily shewn—with reference to Sir W. Molesworth's first proposition "that our colonies cost more than they are worth,"—that the estimated outlay of £4,000,000 sterling per annum assumed to be for colonial purposes only, really covers a large amount of expenditure for purposes purely imperial; and so that, whether our colonies are really worth their cost or not, Sir W. Molesworth's statement of that cost, and of the benefits received in return, is not such as to furnish ground for a safe decision of the question.

And now, having given the fullest weight to every commercial advantage derived from our colonies, it may be worth while to consider the value of any conclusion to be drawn from commercial considerations alone. Can the present annual value in money of our connection with the colonies be deemed a sound, a statesmanlike, or a just criterion of the propriety of its maintenance? Has the extension of the dominion and influence of England no other or higher purpose

than that of securing to her manufacturers and merchants the largest possible return of cash upon the smallest possible outlay? Or is it not rather true that abroad as at home—in obeying those tendencies of our nature which make us peculiarly “a colonizing people,”—in building up that imperial dominion which has given so wide a scope to our enterprise,—we habitually combine with the consideration of purposes merely pecuniary the contemplation of others of a far higher nature? The whole course of our colonial policy during the present century at least, answers the question in a manner not to be mistaken and perhaps nowhere more strongly in the affirmative than in some of its most notable errors. And if further assurance were needed it might even be gathered from Sir W. Molesworth; for the force of these higher considerations is at least tacitly acknowledged in the repeated declaration (following his apparent demonstration that the outgoings on account of our colonial empire exceed the returns) that he does “not propose to abandon any portion of that empire.”\*

Whether the conditions on which he would retain it are consistent with the acknowledgment of motives more elevated than those springing from the desire of present mercantile gain, is a further question—one which may be said to embrace the whole difference between the colonial policy he recommends, and that already in operation.

Sir W. Molesworth proposes in general terms, to amend our present system of colonial policy and government by permitting the colonies to govern themselves; but what precisely he means by self-government is not very apparent.

One point indeed, seems free from doubt. After giving up

\* Speech, p. 37.—This declaration is, however, obviously not strictly consistent with the proposals previously made, (p.p. 14-15) “to withdraw our military protection from the Ionian State, to dispense with our stations and fleet on the west coast of Africa, \* \* \* and to acknowledge the claim of Buenos Ayres to the Falkland Islands.”

the Ionian Islands, the stations on the West Coast of Africa, and the Falkland Islands, Sir William would not permit any of the colonies to become independent. His proposal to limit the delegation of powers of self-government to the colonies by a general reservation "of those powers the exercise of which would be absolutely inconsistent with the sovereignty of this country, or might be directly injurious to the interest of the whole empire," makes this sufficiently clear.\*

Supreme authority being reserved to the home government,—then, reserved for what use? By the sentence above quoted—for the conservation of "the interests of the whole empire:" or, in other words, for the uses proper to all supreme authority: such as are deemed desirable by those who wield it. But if any doubt remain, the following passage must remove it—

"To determine them [the powers that ought to be reserved] it would be necessary merely to consider what are the benefits which this country may derive from the colonies, and what is requisite to secure the continuous enjoyment of those benefits."—Speech, p. 36.

Shortly, then, the reserved powers are to be used for the promotion and protection of imperial interests. This plainly implies superintendence of all colonial acts capable of affecting these interests, and the exercise of a discretion as to whether such acts shall be allowed or not. And then comes the question—To whom would Sir W. Molesworth entrust the exercise of this discretionary control? Now, to this question we have no answer.

The alleged evil, that "the colonies are discontented and badly and expensively governed," is "traced to its source in the colonial system of the Colonial-office."† It is asserted "that the Colonial-office, as an instrument for governing the colonies, must always be far inferior to any mode of self-government by the colonists;" and that the members of the House of Commons "have other things to do besides studying colonial affairs, and looking after the Colonial-office."‡

\* Speech, p. 35.

† Ibid, p. 34.

‡ Ibid, p. 34.

Moreover, documents already before Parliament are stated to afford "incontestible proofs of the impossibility under which this House labours of forming a correct judgment with regard to colonial affairs;" and, "for similar reasons the Colonial-office labours under a similar difficulty:"\* all which goes directly to shew that neither Parliament nor the Colonial-office can do anything but mischief by meddling with the colonies. But no substitute is offered. Then what are we to understand? Let it be admitted, for the sake of argument, that "at least in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the colonists, the men on the spot, must be better judges of their own interests than honourable gentlemen far away in Downing Street can possibly be."† How is the hundreth case to be provided for? And, what is even more important to the argument, how are we to deal with such of the ninety-nine as may happen to affect "the interests of the whole empire," or to diminish "the benefits which this country might derive from the colonies?" Either independence is meant, or here is too much proved.

Nor is Sir William much more explicit as to how he would dispose of the new powers to be delegated to the colonial governments. No exception to the rule of delegating "to the colonies all powers of local legislation and administration which are now possessed by the Colonial Office, with the reservation," &c., is expressed. Nor, when we observe some of those included by name,—as St. Lucia, Malta, and the Mauritius,—is it reasonable to infer that Sir W. Molesworth contemplated any exception. Yet how are we to understand a proposition to give powers of local legislation and administration equally to Gibraltar and St. Helena, where the majority of the residents are British troops and their followers—to St. Lucia where the white population is about one in twenty—and to New Zealand or the Cape of Good Hope? Coming from Sir W. Molesworth, who has just before correctly described the colonies as "some forty different com-

\* Speech, p. 35.

† Speech, p. 34. But it is not possible for one who knows anything of colonial legislation to make this admission without wide exceptions.

munities, with various institutions, languages, laws, customs, wants, and interests," I can only understand from it that he is disposed to escape the difficulties of his subject by keeping out of sight every obstacle he cannot cope with.

However, I will endeavour to meet, as it stands, the proposition to give "free institutions" or "powers of self-government" to the colonies not already possessing these.

Sir W. Molesworth has divided our colonial dependencies into two classes—the military or maritime stations, and the colonies properly so called.

The reasons hitherto offered for not giving extensive powers of self-government to the inhabitants of the former, would appear to spring directly and most legitimately from the very reason for which we hold these places. Primarily, they are fortresses. The interest paramount on the spot is that represented by the garrison—viz. the interest of the empire; and all legislative and executive functions, the exercise or control of which, by the inhabitants generally, might interfere with the perfect security or efficiency of the military power are, by a necessity the force of which is felt wherever such a power is to be sustained, absorbed into it. This does not in any degree relieve the governing power from the duty of administering the public affairs of the locality with the most strict regard to the interests and wishes of the inhabitants; but it does, very palpably, forbid the introduction of those methods of enforcing its performance which Sir W. Molesworth so much admires, and so eloquently recommends.

In colonies, properly so called, the obstacle to self-government is simply the absence of the requisite materials. In very small communities, whatever the forms adopted, the end will be the same—the government will fall into very few hands, and these will be little if at all changed. And where there is a comparatively large population, and but a small number capable of exercising the functions of government, if these be freed from all other than local control, the tendency to despotism, even under the most popular forms of government, is still more decided. In both cases the influence of the crown is, in effect, a popular influence—wholesome as

regards the governing body, and beneficial as regards the mass of the population. Besides being the most influential, it must be the most disinterested authority in such a community.

Whether these reasons for withholding, will stand the test of a comparison with those offered by Sir W. Molesworth for giving, self-government to the colonies, remains to be seen.

Sir William advises self-government, and a reduction of our force abroad, for the same reason—to save money. And the answer, I conceive, is substantially the same in both cases: that the proposed economy would be unjust in the beginning and unreal in the end.

Protection to our foreign trade is due to those who carry it on. To withdraw it would be unjust, as placing them, while abroad, too much in the condition of aliens; and whatever was thus saved by the state would, in the end, have to be paid twice or thrice over by its individual members in providing a less efficient and more expensive substitute for the protection withdrawn.

Similarly, protection is due to those among the inhabitants of our colonies, placed in their present circumstances by British influence, who, even with the widest powers of "self-government," cannot protect themselves. And it is equally due, where as palpably needed, to the interests of those who, in process of time, shall by emigration add themselves to the population of the colonies. To withdraw the influence of the mother country now exerted in the government of the West Indian colonies or the Mauritius, for instance, would be to entrust the ex-masters with the absolute power of making law for their ex-slaves. So it would be wherever there was an inferior race incapable of contending successfully with their white masters. The only other issue to be looked for would be that now illustrated in Hayti.\* Again, to make local influence absolute in the internal legisla-

\* It is just to observe that Sir W. Molesworth displays no reluctance to face this conclusion, as promising a relief to the mother country; see Speech, p. 20. To its probable effect on the colonies themselves he gives less regard.

tion of a colony in which the settlers are yet few, and there are still vast tracts of fertile land to be appropriated and brought into use, would be to sacrifice to the land-speculators of one generation the best interests of the colony for the two or three next. True, there might, in each case, be an apparent present saving of public money. But, putting aside the abandonment of great duties already incurred, would it be a wise economy—nay, would it even be economy of mere money, in the long run? I think not; but the proof lies in the facts; and for these we must descend to detail.

To take, first, the West Indian Colonies. Here the white inhabitants are a small minority; the remainder being of a race so decidedly inferior as to make their social and political subjection, in some degree, an unavoidable consequence. But let it not be forgotten—for it forms the keystone to the only policy possible to the Home Government in these colonies—that the British people have determined that a limit shall be placed to this subjection other than that which has hitherto been, or is even now, indicated by the natural and acquired powers of the inferior race.

The West Indian Colonies, counting Honduras, are eighteen in number, and comprise, according to the latest accounts, a population of about 950,000\* persons. Fourteen

\* It would appear that no census of the West Indian Colonies, distinguishing the white population from the rest, has been taken since 1829; and even that then taken was not complete, as it gave, as to Jamaica, only the number of *slaves*. Omitting Jamaica, the rest which have representative assemblies, viz.: Antigua, Barbadoes, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, Tobago, Tortola, Anguilla, Bahamas and Bermudas, appear to have had, in 1829, a total population amounting to 307,349; among which the whites numbered 27,927, or about one to ten. In the four colonies without representative assemblies, viz.: British Guiana, Trinidad, St. Lucia, and Honduras the total population in 1829 appears to have been 169,009; of which the whites numbered 8,981, or about one to eighteen. By the census of 1844 the population of thirteen of the colonies with assemblies is returned at 700,478. Of the fourteenth, Anguilla, no census appears; but the population in 1829 having been 3,080, it may be taken at 3,500 in 1844. This will give, as the total population of the colonies with representative assemblies in that year, 703,978. Of the remaining four the total population is returned at 188,949. But most of the despatches, enclosing the census of 1844 from each colony, suggest the probability that the true numbers exceed those stated. Hence the numbers assumed in the text, 750,000 and 200,000, making a general total of 950,000.

of them, with an aggregate population of about 750,000, have representative assemblies; and the remaining four are commonly termed Crown colonies.\* We have no general account of later date than 1829 of the relative proportions of the black and white population. The proportion of the former has probably been increased by immigration; but the want of other data compels us to use those of 1829. By these it would appear that in the colonies having representative assemblies the average proportion of whites was as *one to ten* of the rest; and in the others as about *one to eighteen*; and it will be observed that no alteration of these proportions, as to either, which, having regard to the climate, is at all probable, could materially affect the grounds upon which the withholding of "self-government" from such colonies under their present circumstances, is deemed advisable for the benefit of all parties.

Though a great difference appears on paper between the constitution of the governing powers in such of these colonies as have representative assemblies, and in those without, very little attention to their history and mode of action suffices to prove that there is but a small difference in fact. Whatever they may be called, they are all in the nature of oligarchies, except in so far as the oligarchy is tempered by the influence of the Home Government. In the actual government of each there are but two forces operating—that derived from the planters and the commercial classes, and that coming from the crown; and the governing power is the result of their combined action. Sir W. Molesworth would reduce or withdraw the latter, and substitute something else: I presume such an extension of the representative system as would throw the dominant power, now in the crown, into the hands of the negroes. In order to see how any such change would probably work, let us first consider the actual operation of the present forms of government, regarding separately the two influences by which they are directed.

\* The constitution of Honduras, however, is decidedly democratic; and it cannot properly be reckoned with the Crown colonies.



In the first place, each secures the interests proper to it; and this Sir W. Molesworth has, of course, no objection to. He would doubtless give to the small white minorities full power to take care of themselves; and he has distinctly said that all imperial interests should be guarded by sufficient powers reserved to the crown. But there is a third party—the mass of the population—making up, on a general average, not less than fifteen-sixteenths of the whole community. At present this party is cared for by one or both of the other two: (whether it would be better left to its own care will be considered presently.) And by which of these two is its condition operated upon most beneficially?

The most trustworthy answer to this question, apart from an enumeration and examination of all the instances in which each influence has predominated, is that deducible from the motives which are known principally to actuate those who exercise them. Now the interests, and therefore the ruling motives, of the planters and mercantile classes in the West Indian Colonies, hardly admit of dispute. For instance, they are certainly interested, or at least very generally think they are, in shifting the burden of taxation from exports to imports, and from the luxuries to the necessaries of life—also in enforcing regular and continuous labour at a moderate or low rate of wages, and in restraining those wandering habits in which the freed slave delights to feel his freedom, even though he at the same time degrades his social position and injures both himself and the planter, who bids in vain for his labour—in promoting immigration at the public expense, and so causing the people to pay for the means of reducing their own wages; and, in short, in so modifying by law their relations with the people as to give to themselves the utmost practicable advantage. That they would, however completely left to themselves, obey these motives without scruple, I am far from believing. Nor is it against the extremes of evil that the resources of human polity are usually directed—but rather against those common infringements of right which men are daily apt to commit in securing their own interests,

and expecting (in the abstract not unreasonably) their neighbours to do the same. It is even apparent that some of those things which a West Indian planter would be disposed, in seeking only his own profit, to do against the will of his negro neighbours, would yet be for their benefit: as the prevention of squatting, and other practices arising from that tendency to sink into a state of barbarous indolence which they have hitherto commonly displayed when left without control. Generally, however, it is I think indisputable, that the unchecked operation of the power vested in the white section of the population would be neither pleasant nor profitable to the community at large; and, in particular, would in all probability tend to the production of changes in the condition of the negro population the reverse of those which, under the influence of British philanthropy, have been going on in these colonies ever since we sacrificed money to moral feeling in renouncing the slave trade.

The crown, properly speaking, cannot be said to have any interest whatever adverse to that of the people; on the contrary, all its interests lie the other way. There are indeed, methods by which the power of the crown may be defeated in the hands of its agents. The House of Commons may be, as we know it has been, led by the planting and mercantile interests to use the constitutional means of resisting the power of the crown at home to bar its exercise in the colonies. And this, by the way, introduces to view an additional reason for upholding that power, so far as it can be shewn to be promotive of popular benefit in special opposition to an aristocratic power whose influence bears upon colonial legislation in two directions: the so-called "popular element" in the local governments of the West Indian Colonies being, for the most part, identical with a party powerful at home in deciding who shall be the ministers of the crown. The only other manner in which it would appear that the acts of the crown can ever be adverse to the interests of the people is in the appointment of local representatives of its power—as governors—not fitted for the judicious and

impartial discharge of their duties. And time was when abuses of this kind were not infrequent. Colonial, like all other patronage, has no doubt been grossly abused. But it is impossible to look at the serious annoyances to which every successive ministry has of late years been exposed in the House of Commons from ill-success in colonial administration, and to doubt that it is, in these days, the interest of every ministry to get the best work at the least cost out of every colonial public servant.

If, therefore, either Her Majesty in Council, or her white subjects, must wield the dominant power in the West Indies, I think it may be safely inferred that the interests of all will be best secured by its resting with the former. And now, passing from what seems probable, it may be worth while to see how far this is confirmed by the facts apparent upon the proceedings of the colonial governments.

In the Crown colonies, the legislative council is not destitute of the representative element. It is composed of the chief officers of the government, and equal numbers of planters and merchants, nominated by the crown, but holding their seats independently. The discussions are public; and the non-official members, if out-voted, have a right to record a protest, which the Governor is bound to send to the Secretary of State. The influence of the crown is frequently used to prevent improper expenditure, about which the local section of the council would not have hesitated. And the accounts of the expenditure of public money are published in detail in the colonial newspapers. It is a well-established fact that in almost every instance, in all the colonies, in which the power of the crown has over-ruled that of the locality, the interest at stake has been, not that of the crown, but that of the people; and it is equally indisputable that where the power of the crown has been greatest, and most freely exercised, there the condition of the people is best. Take the two classes of measures which have for some years been most prominent in the legislation of these colonies—those having reference to the completion of the great work of emancipation,

by facilitating the progress of the liberated slaves to the condition—not attainable at a bound—of free, self-dependent, and industrious men; and those required to provide an additional supply of free labour for the planters. The discouragement of squatting, the punishment of vagrancy, the holding out of all legitimate inducements to steady industry, and the provision of adequate means of education, are the chief objects of the Home Government in the promotion of the former. The planters, on their side, would do anything necessary to make the negroes work, but object, perhaps not very unnaturally, to those mild and withal somewhat costly means by which the crown (obeying the impulse towards a high regard for the freedom and civilization of the negro received from the British people) would attain that end. And with reference to immigration the two powers find themselves similarly opposed. The planters are too often inclined to raise the required funds by taxes on the imports of food, or other necessaries, or otherwise from the pockets of the labourers they have, and also to use them when raised without such regard to the state of the labour market, the condition and prospects of the immigrants, the fairness of the contracts under which they come, or the means of enforcing these contracts without improper severity, as the crown demands due to the interests of the negro labourers. Again, every disinterested observer of the present condition of these colonies sees that to neglect to educate the negroes, now they are free, is the greatest political error the ruling white minority can commit, even solely with reference to their own interests. And still more obvious is it that without education so large a majority of a subject race cannot safely be entrusted with the use of such political power as any broad system of representative government must necessarily place in their hands. Yet all the remonstrances of the crown on this subject have been unavailing with the representative assemblies. The only colony in which a liberal provision has been made for education and spiritual instruction is British Guiana—a Crown

colony; and the provision there even is in imminent danger of being withdrawn by a stoppage of the supplies.\*

As it is with education so it is with many other just wants of a well-ordered community—as the administration of justice, police, prisons, hospitals (not, as in this country, provided by private bounty), lunatic asylums, workhouses, savings'-banks—all institutions of the advantage of which there is no manner of doubt in this country, and of which there would be less in the West Indies were the mass of the population of one blood with their legislators. Some of them are partially provided for, and others not at all. Great progress has been made in Jamaica of late years; but that is a large colony, is not, itself, in a satisfactory condition, and is still far in advance of the others which have representative assemblies. In all these respects, as indeed in every other, the power of the crown, when brought to bear upon the internal legislation of the colonies, is invariably used to promote the interests of the people—of those who, were Sir W. Molesworth's idea of democratic and responsible government to be realised in these regions, would receive into their own hands a power quite as absolute as any ever yet exercised from this country—but how *use it*?

If it be inexpedient to give despotic rule to the white

\* Sir W. Molesworth alludes to this affair [speech p. 25] as marking the despotic nature of the control exercised by the crown in the West Indian Colonies. If the facts be fairly observed, even as stated by Sir William, they may be said rather to tell the other way; seeing that in the largest and most important of the colonies not having a representative assembly, the representative principle in the government, is used by the crown's nomination of non-official members to seats in the governor's council, is strong enough to bring into practical operation, upon a question touching the proposed reduction of some official salaries, that ultimate security for attention to the wishes of the governed which has hitherto always satisfied the House of Commons. The supplies are withheld because the governor will not agree to a sweeping resolution to take 25 per cent. from all salaries of more than 700 dollars a year during a period of temporary distress.

By the last census, the population of the four colonies without representative assemblies was as follows:—

British Guiana . . . .	102,354
Trinidad . . . . .	60,319
St. Lucia . . . . .	21,001
Honduras . . . . .	10,000

minority, it is still more evidently so, yet, at all events, to give the same to the negro majority. In their present state of civilization it would be not only absurd but cruel—and to none more so than to themselves—to make them the arbiters in political questions touching the rights of property and of labour, and of the expediency and the proper extent of those sacrifices which the enlightened rich voluntarily make in providing and maintaining means of relieving the distresses and instructing the ignorance of the poor. The planters would certainly be the very last to desire such a change; nor would it be just on our part even to place them in danger of it. And if the negroes desired it, it would be upon a false estimate of the benefit they could possibly derive from taking into their own hands the exercise of a power which is already wielded for their benefit, and that with an elevation of purpose and a degree of ability to which their warmest and most sanguine friends could not hope to see them attain. Indeed, without casting any reflection upon the negro character—regarding it as fully worthy of all that we have done with a view to its elevation—it may be affirmed that the most certain issue of perfect “self-government” in the West Indies, now, would be the rapid destruction of every British interest in their soil.\*

Differing, then, with Sir W. Molesworth, I venture to conclude that “free trade with the colonies and free access to the

\* Sir W. Molesworth has taken some trouble in comparing our North American Colonies with the United States, as to the salaries of their governors, and the expenses of their government generally; and when he comes to the West Indies still directs the reader's attention to “the standard of the United States,” as proving that “the salaries of the higher functionaries in the West Indian Colonies are all excessive.” I presume his non-reference, here, to that remarkable and only instance of West India: “self-government,” the republic of Hayti, was an oversight. That it was far more apposite scarcely needs to be observed; and as the population of Hayti is supposed to be about twice that of Jamaica, and its republican institutions have borne some thirty years' wear, it may be received as affording a fair sample of the effects of self-government on a negro population. The accounts we have of these are certainly not very favourable; and I may mention, by the way, that no white person is allowed to become a citizen, or a proprietor of land, and that the president of the republic has a salary of 40,000 dollars (£8,300) a year, with a body-guard of three regiments of cavalry and two of infantry.—Vide Encyclopédie des Gens-du Monde.

colonies" should not, as to the West Indies, "be the sole end and aim of the dominion which Great Britain still retains;" that, on the contrary, to make them so would, here as elsewhere, be basely to betray a trust reposed in her by Providence—beginning in this particular instance with the abandonment of the fruits of all that she has yet effected towards freeing and civilizing the negro race; and that as this must, in all human probability, be the result of "delegating powers of self government to the colonists," the withholding of such powers is, for the present, a primary duty.

There is one distinction very decidedly marked between the colonies last mentioned, and those more properly termed colonies, the application to which of Sir W. Molesworth's panacea of self-government remains to be considered: the latter have no subject race. In the North American Colonies there are yet a few Indians, and there are the occasional rivalries and animosities, now fast dying away, of the French and English sections of the population; in New Zealand there are some tribes of aborigines, of a comparatively noble nature, yet hardly won over from contention to amalgamation with the settlers; and in New South Wales there are a few remnants of another race, whose fate it seems to be to pass rapidly away before the axe, the plough, and the musket of the white man. But in all these there is, strictly speaking, no subject race, as in the West Indies and Mauritius, at the Cape, and in Ceylon; and each community is, substantially, composed of men perhaps as fit to be entrusted with the powers of self-government as the majority of their fellow subjects at home. Yet it does not follow that; even here, the immediate delegation of such powers in full, reserving to the crown only those necessary to preserve "free trade with and free access to" the colonies is consistent with a due regard to "the interests of the whole empire." The duty of the mother country here too includes the protection of some who cannot protect themselves.

Sir W. Molesworth seems to have lost sight of the interests of the immigrant population of our growing colonies as completely as he has put aside those of the negro labourer. Closely as he has scanned our colonial system, he would appear not to have noticed the fact that a new colony, most especially with reference to that use of it on the value of which he does, himself, lay most stress—its fitness to receive and provide for the surplus population of the mother country—is essentially progressive in its nature; and that the fitness of its inhabitants to exercise the powers of self-government with benefit to themselves, and also with justice to others who, though scarcely less interested in the results, must unavoidably be excluded from any participation in the guidance of such powers, has a relation of some constancy to each stage of its progress.

A hundred, a thousand, or five thousand men settled under the British flag at the mouth of a river which drains a territory as large as the United Kingdom, cannot be regarded as fit recipients of the power of making all laws for the internal rule of that territory. Let it be considered that they are but the first few thousands of many coming from the same source, and equally entitled to appropriate and make use of the land of the colony, and to develop and derive profit from every natural advantage it possesses not fairly absorbed in supplying the wants of their predecessors. So much of the unappropriated land as cannot yet be profitably handed over to individual control, justly remains in the custody of the sovereign power, in trust for future comers: it cannot with propriety be placed elsewhere. When and how it shall be disposed of, and what shall be done with the proceeds, are questions, as repeated experience has proved, of higher importance to the future welfare of the colony than any others whatever; and these, it is well known, cannot be left to the decision of the first small and immature communities without incurring imminent risk of postponing indefinitely the application of labour and capital to the land in the proportions alone consistent with any measure of prosperity for the



colony.\* In all such instances (and every young colony affords one) "self-government," as defined by Sir W. Molesworth, would mean the renunciation, at home, of all care for future settlers, and, in the colony, the substitution of scattered squatting for a gradual extension of the cultivated districts, the buying and selling of land for its reclamation and use, and rapid alternations of speculative prosperity and adversity, of the elation and despair of mere gambling, for the steady and equable progression which alone constitutes a real advance. But, as to colonies of this class, it can hardly be requisite to do more than confront Sir W. Molesworth's general proposition with portions of his own speech. For instance, in expressing his unqualified approval of "the well-known plan of Mr. Wakefield, [Speech, p. 37] he, in fact, affirms all that I have here asserted; for whatever may be thought of that plan as a remedy for the evils attending the unregulated appropriation of colonial land, of its apt and able exposure of those evils I presume there are now none who entertain a doubt. But if the control of the gradual appropriation of the land, the process which of all others is the most constant, and the manner of conducting which must vitally affect the prosperity of the colony from the first to the last hour of its growth, be more fitly entrusted to the Home Government than to any local authority,—and if, as the same argument equally proves, it is necessary to retain in the parent state all powers requisite to ensure the adequate discharge of the duties of the trust assumed by it on behalf of the emigrants, future owners of the unappropriated soil,—how can "self-government" be truly expedient in any other sense than as it now exists—to the extent of giving free scope to local discretion, wherever its exercise is not found to clash with general rules, as to the disposal of land or anything else

\* With regard to the present bearing of these considerations upon the Australian colonies, to which they are now chiefly applicable, vide "Papers relative to the occupation of crown lands, New South Wales," presented to Parliament in August, 1848, particularly Earl Grey's despatch to Governor Fitzroy, of August 11, 1848, and the report from the colonial land and emigration commissioners (dated August 3, 1848,) enclosed therein.

of similar interest, laid down by the Home-Government, as well with a view to the progressive prosperity of the colonies themselves,—and especially the prosperity of those bands of new settlers who are annually leaving the mother country for the colonies,—as to those purely imperial interests to which, alone, Sir W. Molesworth deems the regards of the Home-Government due?

The sweeping assertion that “in every portion of the globe the British colonies are more economically and better governed in proportion as they are self-governed,” were it strictly in accordance with the facts, would prove nothing in favor of Sir W. Molesworth’s proposition that they should all be permitted to govern themselves; for the only point in the argument of any importance, the degree in which each is now capable of self-government, is assumed. Human beings are undoubtedly, “better governed in proportion as they are self-governed;” but as the degree in which they are capable of this mode of government varies, so does the expediency of leaving them to its guidance. But that is not properly termed self-government which substantially includes the power to govern for others, to reduce others to a state of subjection, or to achieve present aggrandisement for the governing few, at the price of accumulating future difficulties for yet absent many. In the first days of a new settlement it is perfectly natural that the preservation of self, and a spirit of enterprise, should be, as they commonly are, the ruling tendencies. Each man desires, first to keep his footing and provide for daily wants, and secondly to grow rich as fast as he can. The peculiarity of his position most obvious to an ordinary apprehension is the extent to which the security for his very food has become more precarious, while the prospect of his becoming a wealthy man has been greatly improved. Hence the stimulus which converts men so situated into active self-reliant settlers, who at home would never have displayed, as they never would have been so strongly called

upon for the exercise of, any such qualities. These urgent personal tendencies are doubtless essential to the prosperity of the settlement; but it is very certain that they are apt to result ill if left uncontrolled. Accordingly, it is the first duty of the parent state so to keep in check the impulse to individual advancement by all means within reach, as to make it subservient to the general good. The first adventurers desire only to make a fortune. A higher wisdom is required to make this desire the means of founding a new community. And this can come only from the Home-Government.

But with the progress of time the need for interference diminishes. As each community advances from the loose and miscellaneous elements of its first formation towards that state of maturity in which the various orders of a compact and civilized community are developed, the fund of stability, common sense, and honesty, available for the management of its public affairs becomes such as to render the withholding of a due measure of self-government both inexpedient and difficult. And as the process of transferring such powers from the parent state to its dependencies may be said, with reference to the rapid growth of our colonies, to be always proceeding, and it is one which no combination of human qualities on the part of the eager, aspiring, but yet immature dependency and the grave official parent ruler, can be conceived entirely to divest of occasional discontent on the one side, and mistakes of tenacity in adherence to routine on the other, it is not very surprising to find that our colonial government has, on the whole, a changeable and ill-tempered aspect.

To mistake this for a certain indication of something constitutionally rotten underneath, is one of the grossest popular errors of our time. It derives its substance from an aggregation of petty colonial grievances, regarded without due reference to their several sources, and its form from a low and narrow view of the relations really subsisting between the United Kingdom and the vast colonial empire which, by

an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, has been submitted to its sovereignty. For the maintenance and propagation of this error, and thence for no small increase of the natural difficulties of colonial government, we are much indebted to reformers like Sir W. Molesworth.

From modes of governing to those of founding colonies the transition is easy. But Sir W. Molesworth would seem to have pursued his investigation of both with too much haste to make it otherwise than superficial as to either. After condemning, in no mild terms, "the Colonial Office fashion of colonising," he points the way to improvement in the following passage:—

"But to colonize beneficially it is necessary that the higher and richer, as well as the poorer classes—that the employers of labour as well as the employed—that all classes of society should migrate together, forming new communities, analogous to that of the parent state. On such principles alone have successful colonies been founded in ancient or modern times. On such principles the colonies of Greece and of New England were founded. For instance, from the over-crowded cities of Greece the colonists departed under the guidance of their foremost men; they carried along with them the images of their heroes and their gods, whose common worship linked them for ever to their ancient home. Arrived at their destination, they formed states after the model of the parent city; they flourished in wealth, excelled in all the arts of civilized life, extended the empire, and added to the renown of the Dorian or Ionian name. Not dissimilar in principle was the old English mode of colonising, except that our colonies, instead of commencing their existence as independent states, professed allegiance to the mother country; but their charters gave them all the essential powers of self-government, and complete control over their internal affairs. They flourished rapidly, were most loyal, and sincerely attached to our empire, till we drove them into just rebellion by our new colonial system."\*

\* [Speech, p. 39.] the final words of this passage—"till we drove them into just rebellion by our *new colonial system*"—are calculated to convey an erroneous impression. The dispute with the North American Colonies was confined to the question of *taxation*. The right of Parliament to legislate internally for the colonies was never denied by them down to the day on which they declared their independence. The distinction between taxation and legislation was fully discussed and broadly laid down at the time; and

The Grecian colonies were offshoots from very small states ; and from all we know of them it is to be inferred that they differed very much from what are now termed colonies. Mitford, describing them, says,

“ Often the leaders were no more than pirates, not unlike the buccaneers of modern times. On a savage coast they seized a convenient port, set slaves to cultivate the adjoining lands, and themselves continued their cruise.”\*

They were all what Sir W. Molesworth declares the English colonies ought not to be—politically independent. There is

has since been sanctioned by the best authorities on constitutional law. The incompetence of Parliament to tax the colonies was explicitly admitted by the statute 18 Geo. III., c. 12, (1778). No attempt of the kind has since been made. What drove the American colonies into rebellion was, therefore, not “ our new colonial system,” but something which has been expressly excluded from our colonial system for the last seventy years. A few pages before (p. 16) Sir W. Molesworth thus describes the origin of the English American Colonies :—

“ A little more than two centuries ago some of the inhabitants of this island, being uneasy at home, had migrated to America ; they were prudent and energetic men, of the true Anglo-Saxon breed, which is best fitted to wage war with the savage and the forest ; and *being left alone, they flourished ; and in the course of a few years, without costing one farthing to this country, they became a numerous and a thriving people.* When the shopkeepers and other traders of England wished to secure their custom, and according to the notions of the day they petitioned Parliament that the colonists should be confined to the English shop—first, for buying all the goods they wanted in Europe ; secondly, for selling all such parts of their colonial produce as the English traders might find it convenient to buy. Parliament acceded to this request. Thence the old system of colonial monopoly, which was the sole end and aim of the dominion which England assumed over her colonies.”

It is obvious that the whole force of this passage is conveyed by the words in italics ; and that is precisely the part of it which will be found, on reference to history, to have no foundation in fact. There is reason to believe that each of the colonies founded during the seventeenth century drained the mother country of a considerable amount of capital before it was rendered capable of supporting its inhabitants. It is certain that the trade of all of them existing before the outbreak of the civil war was subjected, from the first, to crown monopolies ; and after the Navigation Act of 1651 it cannot be said that their trade was ever free for an hour. If a “ numerous and thriving people” existed anywhere on the continent or islands of America before 1651 (even granting that the colonial trade was free down to that date) history has neglected to record the fact.

Even fifty years afterwards, at the close of the seventeenth century, according to the best authorities now extant [See Grahame II., 403] the whole population of the New England States did not exceed 200,000 ; and those of Virginia had about 100,000. New South Wales, which has only been settled about sixty years, has already (including Port Philip) a population of 200,000 ; and regularly consumes more British produce in proportion to its population than any other country in the world.

\* Mitford's History of Greece, Edit. 1838, I. 290.

also a very material omission in his description of the means at their command. If we regard them through the medium of modern experience it is impossible to escape the conclusion that it was not so much their "images of gods and heroes" as their *slaves*\* that brought them through the difficulties of their new settlements. The very existence of the subject majority is ignored by Sir William.

Of "the old English mode of colonising" we have, in history, three examples,—Barbadoes, Virginia, and New England; all first settled early in the seventeenth century; and from which severally sprang our West Indian colonies, and the southern and northern groups of the United States. Each of these owed its origin and early success to circumstances which are not likely to occur again,—Barbadoes and Virginia to an abundant supply of compulsory labor, and New England to the driving forth from this country by religious persecution of a section of English society comprising some of all classes, but composed chiefly of members of the middle class quite rich enough to have lived in comfort at home, and who would undoubtedly have continued to do so, as their successors do now, had they been allowed the free exercise of their religion.†

\* According to Mitford (I. 367), the result of a poll of Athenian citizens taken in the time of Demetrius Phalereus gave, as their total number, 21,000. At the same time there were resident in Attica 10,000 other freemen, not citizens; and the slaves, men, women, and children, were numbered at 400,000. Adding to the 31,000 freemen four times as many women and persons under age, we have about 40 to 15 as the proportion of slaves to free persons.

† See Hallam's Constitutional History of England, I. 476.—Persecution seems to have been very busy in that age as a coloniser. Hallam relates how lords Say and Brooke, Sir Arthur Haslerig, Hampden, and Cromwell "were preparing to embark for America, when Laud, for his own and his master's curse, procured an order of council to stop their departure." And again, "Laud, in a letter to Strafford (II. 169), complains of men running to New England when there was a want of them in Ireland. And why did they do so, but that any trackless wilderness seemed better than his own or his friend's tyranny?" Laud's order was dated 1st May, 1638 (Rymer, xx. 223). In little more than ten years afterwards (1649) bands of defeated royalists were seeking refuge and a livelihood in the new slave colonies of Barbadoes and Virginia. In 1660 the New England settlements received large numbers of the commonwealth's men fleeing from the Restoration. Similarly, before the end of the century (1685) our metropolitan district of Spitalfields was colonised by some 14,000 French Protestants, driven out by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Excepting the men who founded the settlements of New England, which all took their rise from the same source—the intolerance of the dominant religious sect at home,—no member of the “higher and richer classes,”—no “employer of labour,”—no English gentleman or capitalist, went to any American settlement during the seventeenth century, but with the purpose of applying slave labour to a virgin soil.\*

For the greater part of a century after they were planted, and till long after their success was secured, the New England States were exclusively in the hands of enthusiastic and bigoted sectarians, who refused all political rights to dissenters, and dealt with schism as we do with sedition. The enterprise which took them so far from the home they still loved, and the spirit of independence they displayed in their relations

\* See Grahame's History of the United States, 4 vols. 8vo., 1836.—The first volume contains the history of Virginia and New England down to near the end of the seventeenth century; and a very cursory examination of the details will afford ample evidence of the statements in the text. As the reader may not have this, or indeed any other authority at hand, I transcribe a few of Grahame's marginal indications, by way of showing what may be looked for. Virginia was, apparently, first settled about 1606; and New England about 1621:—

VIRGINIA.—“Dissensions of the Colonists—Hostility of the Natives—Distress and confusion of the colony (1607). The colony a prey to anarchy and famine (1609-10). \* \* Abandonment of the colony determined. \* \* Martial law established (1612). \* \* Introduction of negro slavery (1619). Disputes between the King and the colony (1621). Conspiracy of the Indians—Massacre of the colonists—Dissensions of the London company (1622). The company dissolved (1624). The King assumes the government of the colony—his death (1624-5). Charles I. pursues his father's arbitrary policy—Tyranical government of Sir John Harvey (1629). \* \* Virginia espouses the royal cause (1650)—Subdued by the Long Parliament—Restraints imposed on the trade of the colony (1651).”

NEW ENGLAND.—“Attempts of the Plymouth Company to colonize the northern coasts of America (1606). Popham establishes a colony at Fort St. George—Sufferings and return of the colonists (1607). Captain Smith's voyage and survey of the country, which is named New England (1614). His ineffectual attempt to conduct a colony thither (1615). The company relinquish the design of colonising New England (1619). A congregation of Independents retire to Holland (1610). They resolve to settle in America—Negotiation with the King (1620). They arrive in Massachusetts, and found New Plymouth—Hardships and virtue of the colonists (1621). Their civil institutions—*community of property* (1621-4). Increase of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny in England (1626). Project of a new colony in Massachusetts—Salem built (1627-8). Numerous emigration—Foundation of Boston—Hardships of the new settlers (1630). *Disfranchisement of dissenters in the colony* (1631). Measures adopted (by the King) against the liberties of Massachusetts—Interrupted by the civil wars (1638).”

with the mother country, were but varied manifestations of the ascetic puritanism peculiar to the age. What this was may be seen quite as well, during the same period, at home as abroad. While nerving some to contend with starvation and the Indians in Massachusetts, it was carrying others through the no less desperate series of struggles which ended in the overthrow of the English monarchy on the field of Naseby. We cannot reasonably look for any renewal of it in the nineteenth century; and if we could, I doubt whether so potent a spirit could be prevailed upon to animate a modern scheme of "systematic colonization."

But the great fallacy of Sir W. Molesworth's reference to the "old English mode" of colonising, as affording an example for present use, lies in his omission to distinguish between colonies possessing, and those not possessing compulsory or slave labour. In the former the mode of settlement has always been what may be termed aristocratic: land and labour being found, the colonists brought capital and superintendence, and took the fruits. The richness of a new soil, and the abundance of labour at the price of feeding and controlling the labourer, induced men of station and of some capital to emigrate; and these, with their followers, erected—but always, be it remembered, on a broad substratum of slavery—what looked very like a re-production of the various orders of English society. It was, in all essential particulars, the same in the West Indian colonies of France and Spain. All had free access to the coast of Africa, and used it freely. The parent countries also added to their supply of labour by banishing to their plantations convicts and political offenders; and such was the social condition of England, that for more than a century after the plantation of our slave colonies in America and the West Indies, the kidnapping of young persons in England, and their sale as slaves there, was a common and not unprofitable trade.\*

\* Sir Josiah Child (*A New Discourse of Trade*,—1693) offers the following as reasons why, down to this time, the English had succeeded better in colonisation than the Dutch:—"1st,—They (the Dutch) have not had those causes for peopling colonies which England has had—viz., the persecution of



It cannot be said that in the settlement of the old English colonies, any "system" whatever was adopted. In every instance their early growth was attended with hardships far greater than those which have been endured by any modern colonists; and these were ultimately surmounted by means which could not now be used, simply because they are forbidden by the humanity of the age.

Virginia and Barbadoes, and every other English colony of any importance, planted south of the river Delaware, began with the same elements—a new soil, compulsory labour, and a proprietary grant from the king to some great man, or company of proprietors.\* In most instances

*the Puritans* in the reigns of King James and Charles I. 2ndly,—King Charles's party, after the battle of Worcester [1651], and *the Scots being routed there, helped to plant Barbadoes and Virginia.* 3rdly,—At the Restoration the royalists getting into all employments and offices, and the army being disbanded, &c., *many of the commonwealth party withdrew to New England, &c.* 4thly,—The lowness of the interest of money in Holland, as well as of the customs on merchandize, together with *their toleration of all religions*, and their encouragements given to trade, occasions employment for all their own people at home, as also for multitudes of foreigners who come to settle there."

Macpherson (*Annals of Commerce*, II. 422) quotes this passage, and adds, "Moreover, the Dutch have scarcely had one other great means which we had for the first peopling of Virginia and Barbadoes, viz., picking up many loose and vagrant people, chiefly in the streets of London and Westminster, and other idle and dissolute persons, who, by merchants and masters of ships, were for many years spirited away (as they then termed it) to those colonies."

\* Barbadoes was first granted by Charles I. to the Earl of Marlborough, in 1627. In 1629 he gave up his grant, for £300 a year, to the Earl of Carlisle, to whom the king then granted it anew, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the planters, who "insisted on the king's taking them under his own immediate protection." The grant to Carlisle included *all the English Caribbee Islands.* At the restoration, Lord Carlisle's representative gave up the charter for £1,000; and thenceforward these colonies came under the immediate government of the Crown, and remained so, with the single exception of the small Island of Barbuda, which was granted to Christopher Coddington, (Governor of Barbadoes in the reign of Queen Anne,) whose heirs still nominate its governor. *Rymer's Fœdera*, V. xviii.

Virginia was first granted by James I. to Sir Thomas Gates and others, forming the "South Virginia Company," in 1606. The grant extended from the 34th to the 41st degrees of north latitude; and so included *Maryland, Virginia, and Carolina.* In 1624 the grant was resumed by the king, after an enquiry by commissioners, on the express ground that through "the neglect of the governor and managers," the colony had not succeeded, and "most of our people sent thither had died by sickness and famine, and by massacres by the natives; and that such as are still living were in lamentable necessity and want." *Fœdera*, V. xvii., pp. 609-16. Afterwards (1632) Maryland was granted to Lord Baltimore; and Carolina (1662) to the Earl of Clarendon.

the holders of these grants rapidly exhausted their means in vain efforts to people the colony, and make it profitable at once; and so utterly failed; and in the rest, subsequent attempts to exert the plenary powers the grant nominally conferred threw the colonists into revolt; and the crown, being appealed to, resumed the grant, and appointed its own governor. The colonies founded without the aid of compulsory labour began with a peculiar order of men—democratic in politics, independent in religion, and extremely enthusiastic in both. They went abroad not to live better, but to live more freely—not to get rich, but to have their own way, even at a great pecuniary sacrifice. That social and political freedom to which Sir W. Molesworth refers presented the aspect of an inquisitorial despotism to all who, being among them, were not of them; and, such as it was, they obtained and secured it only by sacrificing to it every other worldly object. Certainly, if the vigorous early growth of these democratic colonies was due, in any degree, to any “system” adopted at home, it was due to one which would find no acceptance amongst us in these days—to that which fomented the civil war, and brought Charles to the block. Their commercial progress was, for a long time, very slow and full of hardships, and would have been more so but for the indirect aid they derived from the slave colonies; and as their religious enthusiasm died away, the emigration thither of English gentlemen or capitalists almost entirely ceased.

Sir W. Molesworth speaks of the early English colonies as having had “complete control over their internal affairs.” If this was the case anywhere, it was only in the New England States; but even there they were more vexed with the interference of the Crown, than is any colony of the present day.\* In the New England States, in Virginia, and in the West Indian Islands, wherever the Crown had influence, it was perpetually being exercised in the furtherance of

\* In 1638, Charles I. issued a proclamation forbidding the sending of any ships with passengers, or provisions, to New England; and it was only the breaking out of the civil war that prevented an expedition against the colony. —*Fæderu*, V. xx, p. 221.

measures more or less opposed to the desires of the local authorities. True, these measures were generally of a very simple nature, being directed rather to the filling of the royal treasury than to the good government of the community; nevertheless, it cannot be doubted that they were extremely vexatious; and, inasmuch as they bore directly and forcibly upon the productive resources of the colony, they must have seriously affected its "internal affairs."

The first product of these colonies that became saleable to any extent was tobacco. That of the West Indies was not deemed good; and they had but little commercial success till they took to growing sugar. But no sooner did the growth and exportation of tobacco begin to be profitable to the colonists of Virginia, than James I. assumed the pre-emption of all that was imported into this country, selling it again at much more than he gave for it. In 1619, he directed the colonists not to grow more than one hundred weight per man: "for the market was so low that he could not afford to give them above three shillings the pound for it."\* In the following year he prohibited the importation of tobacco by any person not having a license.† Two years afterwards we find him exhorting the Virginia company to grow mulberry trees instead. In 1625, Charles I. prohibited the importation of any tobacco *not* the growth of Virginia;‡ and renewed the royal monopoly.§ And from time to time down to the period of the civil war, these measures were enforced by new regulations.

The staple products of the New England States, fitted for exportation, were for a long time comparatively limited in value. They consisted chiefly of dried fish, timber, and corn. And if the manner in which they were disposed of be regarded, it will be perceived that even these States were indirectly indebted for their commercial success to the abundance of slave labour in the more southern colonies. In

\* Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, II. 302.

† *Fœdera*, V. xvii. p. 233.

‡ *Ibid.*, V. xviii, p. 19.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Virginia, and in Barbadoes, it was found more profitable to import these articles from New England, than to raise them at home, by detaching a portion of their slave labour from the cultivation of tobacco or sugar. Thus a trade sprang up, through the medium of which slavery became, to a great extent, the common support of all;\* and the restrictions applied to the trade of those in the south, told scarcely less heavily on those in the north. So that, though New England produced little that would pay for direct exportation to England, and its inhabitants were consequently little in the way of our custom-house fetters, they still felt their weight.

During the civil war, and for a year or two afterwards, the colonies were left much to themselves; and they traded very freely with the Dutch. But when tranquillity was restored at home, the restrictions on their trade were revived. The navigation laws (A. D. 1651, et seq.) prohibited the exportation of their produce to any country in Europe, except in English vessels, and then it was to be first landed and to pay duty in England. Sir J. Child (Discourse of Trade, 1693) complains, (p. 206) that the New England States presumed "sometimes" to break the law, by sending their dried fish, in their own ships, to Spain direct; but he sufficiently indicates the general character of the laws then in existence, by observing, after noticing the practice of other countries to "confine the trades of plantations to their mother kingdoms;" that "our own laws seem to design the like, as to all our plantations in New England, Virginia, Barbadoes, &c., although we have not yet arrived to a complete and effectual execution of those laws."

It may perhaps be too much to affirm that what is now so much talked of as "systematic colonization," or, as it is described in the last (23rd) Report of the New Zealand Company, "to transplant English society with its various gradations in due proportions, carrying out our laws, customs, associations, habits, manners, feelings,—everything of England, in short,

\* I may here observe that this dependence of the early English colonies upon a full supply of *compulsory* labour is acknowledged by Mr. E. G. Wakefield, and was from the first used to support his arguments in favour of a systematic supply of free labour to our modern colonies.

but the soil," and which Sir W. Molesworth urges upon the House of Commons under the mistaken notion that he is recommending an "old English mode" of colonization—cannot possibly be accomplished. It is a subject on which perhaps no man is yet competent to speak positively. All we know is that it (or anything like it) has never yet been done under circumstances such as we can suppose to be reproduced now. Beyond this, we have nothing to guide us but a reference to those leading principles developed in the growth and visible in the constitution of society, accordance with which is clearly essential to the success of all such arrangements. One of these principles, however, of no mean importance, the more ardent advocates of systematic colonization seem to disregard altogether.

It cannot have escaped the notice of any one who has looked beneath the surface of modern society that its higher classes (those forming the manners and leading the civilization of the rest) are, substantially, composed of families deriving their incomes from capital (fixed or floating) over the actual process of using which they have no personal control. They live by the productive use of their property; but as it is in the hands of others, it is not requisite that they should live in or near the locality of its use. Accordingly they live where they can live most pleasantly. The other orders of society, as a rule, reside where they can best *make* an income—these where they can best *spend* one. And in spending their incomes they create centres of polished life, so to speak, towards which all who have any degree of the same freedom are strongly disposed to gravitate. Now all the colonies have to offer are facilities for the profitable use of capital and labour. They invite only the working classes of society; and not those of all ranks. The invitation is strongest to those who can work best upon the roughest material. Being fields for the fast making, rather than for the pleasant spending of incomes, they offer no invitation whatever to the higher orders of society, or, consequently, to those who minister to the necessities or luxuries of these. It will be observed that the West

Indian planter, and the Irish landlord, are absentees for much the same reason that impels the English landlord to spend the greater part of the year in London. For the same reason, as fast as fortunes are made in India, of a compass suited to home use, they are brought home. It is the same in the other colonies; though less observed where habit gives birth to, and the climate fosters, a personal attachment to the locality. But if the maker of a colonial fortune does not come home to enjoy it, his heir commonly does. And any attempt to prevent such persons acting upon this impulse would be both unjust and unprofitable: unjust, because they only desire to buy (the enjoyments of polished society) in the cheapest market; and unprofitable, because to limit the free use of a fortune is also to diminish the inducement to make it.

It does not seem likely that the lapse of time will weaken the operation of this principle—rather the contrary. It grows more powerful as the class of persons on which it operates most freely is increased in number; and their increase is manifestly dependent on the degree of rapidity with which men can become “independent” by accumulation, and on the facilities afforded for the safe investment of capital beyond the personal control of its owners—in other words, upon the chief elements of commercial improvement. And history confirms this view. Early in the last century Barbadoes was called “little England;\*” and that colony and Jamaica both then (1720-30) reached what has been regarded as the highest point of their prosperity. But as the home government became settled, the temptation to return grew stronger; and gradually the class of gentry transferred itself to England. The same process was going

\* According to a survey by the Governor, it appears that in 1683, the total population of Barbadoes was 66,170, the “free persons” being 17,187. In 1724, the white population amounted to 18,296; but we have no return of the rest. In 1757, the whites were reduced to 16,772, and the negroes were 63,646—total 80,417. In 1787, the whites were 16,127, negroes 64,405, free coloured persons 2,229—total 87,761. In 1829, by the last return distinguishing color, there were, whites 14,959, free coloured persons 5,146, negroes 82,902—total 103,007. The census of June, 1844, gave a total of 122,198 persons: the island having then an average of 734 souls to the square mile; England and Wales having only 275.—*Schomburgh's History of Barbadoes*, 1848—pp. 82-88.

on, though more slowly, with regard to the continental colonies, when the revolution broke out. In short, I should scarcely hesitate to affirm it as a rule, founded upon all the experience we have yet had, that a class of English gentry, of independent means, cannot now be created and permanently maintained in any colony owning the sovereignty of the English crown. And without such a class it is clear that "English society with its various gradations in due proportions" cannot exist.

But the necessity, or the propriety, of any such transplantation is yet to be proved. It seems to be much too readily taken for granted. Why should we desire to see in our colonies mere imitations of society as it is at home? Why seek more than to raise there communities of industrious, self-reliant, and enterprising men—agriculturists—producers of raw material—men well-fed and lodged, and working happily and freely in combination with the powers of nature? Why hamper our plans for a log-house with provision of Corinthian pillars for a palace? The individual thrift that aims at independence must always be the great source of commercial prosperity everywhere. It is in the *making* rather than in the *spending* of fortunes that men benefit, commercially, the community in which they live; and if the colonists who have been successful in the former, or their descendants, go home to do the latter, where is the loss? They go because they have done with accumulating. It does not follow that what they have accumulated will go with them. Do what they may with that, it will pass into the common market for capital, to go where the best security and the highest interest can be obtained for it. In nine cases out of ten it will, in effect, remain in the colony; and if it will not freely, no human effort can keep it there. Nor is it by any means certain that the presence of "the higher orders of society," as they are called, is at all desirable in localities devoted to those branches of production which best suit the colonies, as new countries. Assuming that they could exist, and retain the habits and qualities they are marked by at home, in

countries purely agricultural or pastoral, where there were no large towns, and where the tastes of polished life could not possibly be cultivated as they are in England—a very large assumption,—I think it may be reasonably apprehended that their influence would be rather detrimental than otherwise to the material prosperity of the community.

Let it be remembered that the growth of capital has but one source—the spending of less than is earned—frugality. The higher orders, wherever they exist, influence those about them chiefly by their example; and that inculcates, as a rule, the spending of more than is earned—waste. In improving the manners, they are apt to empty the purses of their imitators. True, the desire to get into these orders is also a spur to frugality; but that operates quite as strongly, if not more so, at a distance; and where the example tells in this way upon one man (in a close association of the higher and lower orders) the contrary effect is produced upon a dozen,—as any one may see who, living in England, will but look about him.

One of the commonest of the complaints made of late years against England on behalf of her colonies is that resting on the practice of transporting thither persons convicted of offences unfitting them to remain in English society. This practice began with our colonial system; and in its commercial effect upon the colonies was long closely connected with the slave trade. It was another source of compulsory labour; the necessity of doing without which is the main difficulty of the colonization of our time, as compared with all that has been done before. Virginia and Barbadoes were used as penal colonies from the earliest years of the commonwealth, if not before; and it was not till after the United States threw off our dominion that we formed a penal settlement in Australia. There were certainly great changes effected at various times in the method of transportation; and these, while they increased its cost to the mother country, doubtless diminished



its commercial value to the colonies. But here it should not be forgotten that these changes sprang directly from the increasing civilization of the inhabitants of both. In the beginning the convicts were simply sold as slaves, and the planters were left to do the rest :\*—in the end, the attempt to make the system accord with modern notions of what a secondary punishment should be has led to its being all but discontinued. The recent changes are to be justified, if at all, upon grounds which I need scarcely enter upon here. My own opinion is that they were begun, in the stoppage of the assignment system, upon an impulse of mistaken philanthropy, fostered by some distinguished authorities in this country who probably now see their mistake. The object in view seems to have been that of making a secondary punishment less objectionable than, in the nature of things and in the present state of the world, it can be made. There was sufficient evidence that the system of assignment served the Australian colonies, commercially, and that it turned a very large proportion of the criminals submitted to it into tolerably respectable characters. The dark side of it, however, was dark enough to build very gloomy speculations upon ; and under the influence of these an attempt was made to improve it by keeping the criminals more together, and directly under the eye of the government. The consequences were those alluded to by Sir W. Molesworth ('Speech,' p. 27). The efficacy of what has been done by Lord Grey to remedy this error, the fruits of which met him on his taking office, partly remains to be proved. All that is yet known augurs ultimate success ; and of one thing the papers before parliament convey ample evidence—that any "renewal of transportation" conducted upon the principles laid down by Lord Grey will give no just ground of complaint to the colonists, much less "mar their

\* About seventy persons arrested for participation in the Salisbury rising of Penraddock and Grove (1655), among whom were "divines, officers, and gentlemen," were sent to Barbadoes and sold as slaves for 1550 pounds of sugar each, more or less, according to their working faculties.—*Schomburgk's History of Barbadoes*,—1848, p. 284.—See also a graphic description of some of the incidents of transportation in the 17th century, in Defoe's *Moll Flanders*.

prospects, and make them for ever the plague spot and reproach of Australasia.”\*

Sir W. Molesworth takes some pains [Speech, pp. 21-25] to prove that the rate of expenditure in government is least where the share of the local authorities in the government is greatest, and that, as a rule, economy and self-government are found directly proportioned to each other. He thus opens an interesting question; but, unfortunately, he does not find the answer to it. The method he uses is nothing more than a comparison of certain returns of the gross expenditure in each colony with the population of the colony. But no reliance whatever is to be placed upon this method, because, in point of fact, with one or two exceptions, it is only from the crown colonies that we get tolerably perfect and uniform returns of the local expenditure; besides which, in all the returns relied upon, permanent and current expenditure are mixed together—and, in point of reasoning, the comparison of different colonies on this basis is palpably sustainable only on the assumption that the necessary expense of governing a given territory is dependent solely upon the number of its inhabitants; which is palpably not true. So that whatever were the results obtained by this mode of enquiry, they would be practically useless.

But the results actually obtained do not in fact bear out Sir W. Molesworth's proposition. The examples he selects for comparison appear to do so; but others, quite as close at hand, would lead to the opposite conclusion. For instance, the two oldest and most populous of the West Indian Colonies, Jamaica and Barbadoes, have both got representative assemblies; and, according to the returns relied upon by Sir W.

\* It seems to be very often forgotten that New South Wales was originally settled solely as a penal colony. The right of the mother country to make that use of such a spot, previously unoccupied, will hardly be denied. And if those who went there to profit by the consequent supply of labour afterwards discover that this advantage carries with it certain disadvantages, it may be doubted whether they have any very good right to complain. The convicts were not sent to pollute the colony—the colony gathered itself around them.

Molesworth,\* the government of Jamaica costs about 15s. 2d. and that of Barbadoes about 11s. 6d. per head. Again, there are the two islands of St. Lucia and St. Kitts, with a population very nearly equal, but one with and the other without a representative assembly. By the returns, the government of St. Lucia (the crown colony) costs about 13s. per head, while the other (which by the rule should be governed more cheaply) costs 14s. 8d. per head. These instances might be multiplied; but it is needless. The method of computation being utterly fallacious, the results are really of no value whatever.

Sir William afterwards hazards another hypothesis, [Speech, p. 26] "that the rate of expenditure in a thinly peopled territory will generally exceed that of a thickly peopled one"—and, assuming its truth, proceeds to apply it thus:—

"But the crown colony of Mauritius is four times as densely peopled as Jamaica, yet the rate of expenditure in Jamaica per head of the population is less than one-half what it is in the Mauritius. Again, the crown colony of Malta is one of the most densely peopled spots on the face of the earth, yet the rate of expenditure is 16s. 6d. a head of the population, or twenty per cent. more than that of the plantations in the West Indies; or nearly double the ordinary rate of expenditure in the thinly peopled North American colonies. Again, Malta is more than twice as thickly peopled as the Ionian States, but these states have a certain amount of self-government, and their rate of expenditure in 1840 (the last return which I have been able to get at) was 14s. 3d. a head, or 2s. 3d. a head less than that of Malta.

It will be observed that the only crown colonies introduced here are Mauritius and Malta—each an important military station. The population of the former was increased between 1835 and 1845, chiefly by the immigration of Indian labourers, from 90,600 to 179,500; and the addition being nearly altogether of adults, with a small proportion of females, the internal expenses for police, &c., were greatly increased.† In

\* Commons, No. 49, Sess. 1845; and No. 740, Sess. 1847.

† The number of coolies received in Mauritius from the renewal of immigration from India, under the order in Council of 1843, down to the 30th November, 1847, was 68,536; of which number 56,154 were male labourers. Deducting the deaths and departures in the same interval, the number remaining in the colony at the last mentioned date, appears to have been about 55,000.

fact, the planters have been trying a great experiment in immigration; and because it entails a large subsequent outlay, Sir W. Molesworth, who does not look below the surface, declares that they are "grievously taxed." Malta cannot be included in the comparison at all. It is not much larger than London and its suburbs;\* is strongly fortified and garrisoned; and has a population of 140,000.

But, apart from these objections, this hypothesis is quite as unfortunate as the other; and Sir William seems to betray some consciousness of this in the selection of his examples for comparison. Why go from Jamaica, with its 59 persons to the square mile, all the way to the Mauritius to find a colony more densely peopled? There is Barbadoes close by, as similar as possible in every other respect, but with no less than 734 to the square mile, or more than three times as populous as Mauritius; and more than twelve times as populous as Jamaica; yet the difference in the cost of government is apparently not much; and if analysed would be found to be still less. The fact is, as very little observation will prove, that any material change in the density of the general population, usually alters the character of the government expenditure, and so alters it as to render a comparison of gross amounts with other countries, on the sole basis of relative density, entirely useless for any practical purpose.

And, after all, it is to be observed that, here as elsewhere, the saving of money is not always economy. It may be (and I have already adduced some reasons in favour of this view,) that the colonies ruled most cheaply by the year, are ruled most expensively in the end.

The spirit of the partisan, as distinguished from that of the reformer, is in nothing more conspicuous than in the extraordinary blindness of Sir W. Molesworth to every recent change in the general course, or in the details, of our colonial

\* It is about as large, altogether, as the space between Brentford and Barking one way, and Highgate and Streatham the other.

policy, which, had he given it due prominence, might have detracted from the effect of his speech as an attack upon the Colonial Office. And he would appear to be almost equally incapable of perceiving any sign of improvement, actual or prospective, in the condition of the colonies themselves. Indeed it may be said to be impossible that any one gathering their knowledge of the subject from this speech should have the most remote idea that alteration for the better was, or could be, anywhere in progress. One or two instances of the operation of the spirit alluded to have already been pointed out by reference to papers previously laid before the House of Commons; and I shall have occasion to notice others in recurring to such points in the speech as have not yet been noticed. These may perhaps be best dealt with in the order in which they occur in the speech itself.

Sir W. Molesworth [Speech p. 8] "believes that the United States would not accept of the Bermudas as a gift," and that "they are chiefly used as a comfortable residence for the admiral on the North American Station." These islands have been in our possession since 1609, and have always been considered the Gibraltar of the West Indies. Washington deemed them so valuable, in a military point of view, that he desired to annex them to the Republic, to make them, as he said, "a nest of hornets to annoy English commerce."\* It is also to be observed that a considerable part of our expenditure here is due to the maintenance of a large convict establishment. If, incidentally, the Bermudas form a comfortable residence for the admiral of the station, perhaps that is hardly to be regretted, seeing that they also form a very proper one.

The charge for the civil establishment at St. Helena [Speech, p. 8] consists, in fact, only of retired allowances and pensions, paid under the agreement made with the East India

\* Martin, p. 112.

Company on receiving the island from them in 1833. When these cease, St. Helena will pay its own establishment.\*

The military force maintained at the Mauritius Sir W. Molesworth supposes [Speech, p. 12] is "to keep down the planters," who, he says, "are discontented and overburdened by taxation." Having taken some trouble to ascertain the facts, I confidently believe that he is wrong upon both points. The troops there seem to be no more necessary to "keep down" the colonists, than the force employed at Gibraltar, or in Jamaica, or in Canada, is required for such a purpose. They form a garrison for the protection of a naval point d'appui; and military authorities are of opinion that it cannot be adequately protected with a less force. There is no evidence that the planters are "discontented and overburdened with taxation;" but there is evidence that their taxation has of late years been greatly increased by the mode and extent of the measures of immigration promoted by themselves; and also that they have received, through the influence of the Home Government, invaluable assistance in anticipation of their present commercial distress; and, in particular, that the burden of taxation has, through the same influence, been very considerably reduced. In September last Lord Grey sent out a despatch urging the Colonial Government, in view of approaching difficulties, to reduce its expenditure as much as possible; and an answer has lately been received from the Governor, announcing a reduction of taxation to the amount of £65,000: about one-half of which fell directly on the planters, and the rest on the other classes of the community.† About the same time, to obviate the worst effects of the heavy failures at home, the Governor was authorised to make advances to the planters on sugars, actually shipped and properly insured, to an extent not exceeding £150,000; and measures were also taken, through the agency of the East India Com-

\* Vide evidence of Earl Grey before Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates. Q. 6916.

† Speech of Mr. Hawes, 'Times,' 26th July, 1848; also see Correspondence, Commons' Returns, No. 61, Session 1848.

pany, to prevent any stoppage of the export of rice from Bengal to the Mauritius, on which the large immigrant population recently introduced into the island is mainly dependant for subsistence.\* As to the "free institutions" proposed by Sir W. Molesworth there are good reasons (which have already been stated) for the opinion that any such institutions, though possible in form in the Mauritius, are not so in fact. And, were it otherwise, as an important military position, the island could not be properly left entirely to the government of its inhabitants.

British influence has perhaps never been exerted more meritoriously, or more successfully than in Ceylon. Since we took the maritime provinces from the Dutch, in 1798, and relieved their inhabitants from the despotic government and rigid commercial monopoly they had previously endured, the population and trade of the island have been steadily and rapidly advancing. There are evidences in the interior† of the place having, at some past time, supported an enormous population; and the experience of the last twenty years warrants the conclusion that, under English rule, it may, at no very distant period, return to its ancient condition. The earliest complete return of the population is that of 1827, when it was 889,584. In 1845 it was 1,421,631; showing a rate of increase which would double it in about twenty-four years. In 1827 the value of the exports was £317,694; in 1846 £679,286. In the same interval the revenue of the island rose from £256,491 to £415,146; and the expenditure from £388,788 to £448,232; but the excess of expenditure in 1846 was an exception, arising from temporary causes‡—the revenue having regularly exceeded the expenditure for several years before. For some years past a very large amount of British

\* For the official correspondence on the subjects here adverted to, vide Return (Commons) No. 61; Session 1848.

† Described by Sir Emerson Tennant in his Report of October 1846.

‡ Vide Sir E. Tennant's Despatch of 10th May, 1847.

capital has been flowing into Ceylon,\* particularly for the growth of coffee, and the cocoa nut palm. Since 1834 about 100,000 acres have been brought under coffee cultivation by Europeans; and there were in 1847 about 400,000 acres more already purchased from the government, and in course of preparation for that plant.† Accordingly, the quantity of Ceylon coffee sent to England, which in 1835 was 1,870,000 pounds, was in 1845, 16,657,000, and in 1846, 18,350,000 pounds. Slavery has been gradually abolished in all its forms, the natives are acquiring the habit of labouring regularly for wages, the distinctions of caste are disappearing, and the higher class of natives are engaging in commerce; and with upwards of 21,000 children in the schools of the island [Blue Book of 1845]—one seventh of the population—there is every prospect of a long continuance of the course of improvement thus entered upon.

The expenditure by the Home Government is almost entirely military, and is required to maintain a sufficient garrison in the forts, which are of great extent and strength—Ceylon being in the Indian Ocean much what Malta is in the Mediterranean. Sir W. Molesworth proposes [Speech, pp.13-14] to transfer the burden to the East India Company; but if the company took it, it must also take the power to indemnify itself for the outlay, which it could only do by taxing the trade of the island, or, in other words, by making the English capitalists, there and elsewhere, specially interested in that trade, pay the whole cost of the garrison. If their capital only was protected, this might be just. But it is not so. All the British capital employed in that part of the world shares the benefit. The cost, therefore, if it must be incurred (and Sir W. Molesworth does not object to it), can obviously be most justly distributed by charging it upon the Imperial Treasury.

\* Sir E. Tennant says a million sterling per annum during the five years 1841-46.—Report, Oct. 1846.

† Vide Sir E. Tennant's Despatch of 10th May, 1847.



Sir W. Molesworth, referring to Hong Kong [Speech, p. 15], observes, that between May, 1841, and September, 1846, we expended upon this island £314,000, and that it "bids fair to be a costly colony." This inference of the future from the past is not justifiable. The past expenditure was requisite to fit the island for the uses in view of which we obtained the cession of it from China in 1842—those of a fortified trading station, for the protection and promotion of our growing commerce with that country. The erection of necessary public buildings and of one or two batteries, and the construction of roads—one going completely round the island, a distance of 23 miles—all required for the protection, or the traffic, or the internal police of the island, would appear to have absorbed nearly the whole of what has hitherto been spent there by the mother country, exclusive of the outlay during the first year of possession, which should rather be included in the expense of the Chinese war, for which we have been reimbursed.

The recent accounts shew that the place is extremely likely, before long, to pay its own expenses. The population had increased from 7,500 when we took possession in 1841, to 21,067 in 1846. This seems to be partly due to the increase of trade, encouraged by the perfect protection afforded, and the total absence of customs or shipping duties, and partly by the greater salubrity of the island, caused by the general system of drainage now carried into effect. A large proportion of the British exports from Canton are previously warehoused in Hong Kong. The value of six articles—sugar, alum, sulphur, rice, nut-oil and salt, alone,—imported in Chinese vessels in 1846 was £325,700, and in 1847 £498,200. The local revenue for 1845 was £22,242, and for 1846 £27,047.\* The local expenditure for 1845 was £66,726, and for 1846 £60,351. The accounts for 1847 have not yet been published; but the reports of the trade and population leave no doubt that the increase of the revenue has continued; and

\* This might have been greatly increased had customs or shipping duties of any kind been imposed—Vide *Blue Book* for 1846.

published dispatches from the Governor announce that the local expenditure has been still further diminished, partly by a considerable reduction of salaries. At the same time, while the completion of the public works requisite in the outset, will reduce the current outlay by the Home Government in the ordnance department to a comparatively small amount, the recent reduction of the military establishment and staff from a field force to the scale of a garrison, will materially diminish the military expenditure.

The past expenditure, therefore, has been of a special character ; and that of the future is likely, at no distant date, to be covered by the local revenue, which, it should be remembered, arises from sources for the most part created by the past expenditure.\*

For the value of this possession to our China trade, it needs no explanation to any who have property at stake in that part of the world. The character of the Chinese government and people, as displayed in all our recent transactions with them, amply proves, not only the propriety, but the *economy* of retaining an outpost like this near the centre of our commerce with that country.

Sir W. Molesworth objects, particularly, to the salary of the Governor, as too high ; but he does not notice the fact, that that officer has other duties of a very important nature to perform under the Foreign Office. He has the management of the consular establishments in all the ports of China opened to us by treaty ; and in the present state of our relations with China may be regarded, substantially, as our Ambassador to that country.

What Sir W. Molesworth says of the new settlement of Labuan seems to imply ignorance so complete of all the circumstances, apart from the item in the miscellaneous estimates

\* When Sir W. Molesworth comes to speak of colonies having representative assemblies, and so desires, in accordance with his main argument, to make it appear that the expenditure is *low*, he shows himself quite alive to the propriety of excluding from accounts of current expenditure "extraordinary charges for new works and buildings."—See Speech, p. 23, on the local expenditure of Canada.

upon which he comments, that I cannot perhaps do better than state shortly (from documents already before Parliament) why, and with what prospects, this addition has been made to our colonial possessions. That Singapore, a similar settlement made about thirty years ago on the south-eastern extremity of the peninsula of Malacca, has been eminently serviceable to our trade at a very small expense, is generally known to all who are in any degree connected with the India or China trade.\* Labuan is at the opposite side of the Gulf of Siam, and (like Singapore) in the direct route of our trade through the China Sea. It is much better situated than Singapore as a rendezvous for the naval force required for the suppression of piracy in the Archipelago.† It possesses an abundant supply of coal, well fitted for the use of our steamers; and is, therefore, admirably adapted to facilitate the contemplated extension of steam communication from Singapore to Port Essington, and thence to Sydney. These advantages were repeatedly pointed out to the Government by British merchants in all the chief cities of the kingdom, and the propriety of taking possession of the island strongly urged, before any movement in that direction was made. Already, the coal has been turned to account. The Admiralty were previously paying about 35s. a ton for the coal delivered to them by contract in this neighbourhood. A lease of 550 acres of the Labuan coal has now been taken of the crown, by an English capitalist, at an annual rent of £100, and a royalty of half-a-crown a ton on all he shall raise beyond a thousand tons; and it is part of the agreement that he shall furnish a certain quantity of coal to the navy at 11s. per ton. The land is being surveyed for letting; and it is anticipated that there will be strong competition for it. The only military force employed

\* The settlement of Singapore was established under the advice of Sir Stamford Raffles, in 1818. In 1823-4 its imports were valued at about £1,311,000, and its exports at £970,000. In 1846-7 these amounts had risen, respectively, to £2,897,000 and £2,409,000. For a detailed account of the reasons for founding this settlement (most of which are equally applicable to Labuan), and of the benefits our commerce in that region has derived from it,—See *Mr Gregor's Commercial Tariffs*, part XXIII.

† Its value, in this point of view, is forcibly described by the writer of an article in the current number of the *Edinburgh Review*—Vide pp. 88-9.

will consist of about 200 men, detached from Singapore, to be replaced ultimately by a small native corps. The charges on the estimates for the present year are chiefly for the erection of temporary buildings, absolutely necessary at first. Sir J. Brooke is very confident, from his knowledge of the internal resources of the place, that in a very short time it will be completely able to maintain itself.\*

As "the extravagance of Colonel Gawler in South Australia" is twice adduced [Speech, p. 20; and again at p. 28] in proof of the ill-effects of "the colonial system of the Colonial-office," it is to be inferred that Sir W. Molesworth regards this as a particularly valuable piece of evidence in his favour. And yet why he should so regard it is to me quite inconceivable; and I have reason to believe that it is equally so to those who were most closely concerned in the transactions alluded to. It is generally known that in the settlement of South Australia a departure was made from the usual course. In order to give free scope to the principle, then recently adopted, [and of which Sir W. Molesworth explicitly approves; Speech, p. 37] "that no portion of the land should become private property except upon the payment beforehand of some sufficient price; and that the whole of the land fund thus accruing should be employed in conveying to the colony poor emigrants from the United Kingdom,"† the entire management of the colony was, from the first, vested in a Board of Commissioners,‡ who were empowered to act without the control of the Colonial-office. In 1838 the Commissioners represented to the Colonial Secretary the propriety of recalling the Governor first sent out. Lord Glenelg immediately acquiesced, and asked whom they wished to succeed him. They named Colonel Gawler. That gentleman was sent out. He found the colony in a state of confusion and distress, to

\* See Lord Grey's evidence before the select committee on the miscellaneous estimates, p. 539.

† Vide Second Report from the Select Committee on South Australia, 1841.

‡ By the Act 4 & 5, W. IV., cap. 95, (1835).

remedy which he thought fit to depart from his instructions as to expenditure; and the result was the "extravagance" referred to. In 1840 the Commissioners came to the government, and declared their inability to go on. An inquiry took place, (by a select committee of which Sir W. Molesworth appears to have been an active member) the debt incurred was discharged, the commission dissolved, and the colony placed, *for the first time*, under the control of the Colonial-office. Since that period it has advanced in prosperity with almost unexampled rapidity. Its population already exceeds 30,000, and large funds are now available, from colonial sources, for its increase by immigration; and, finally, the colony pays all its own expenditure, and has a surplus revenue.\*

\* As I observe that this attempt to fix upon the Colonial Office the responsibility of the early disasters of South Australia has been repeated elsewhere, [for instance in the Spectator Newspaper of 29th July] I append one or two extracts from the correspondence between Lord Glenelg and the Commissioners, touching the appointment of Colonel Gawler. The whole correspondence will be found in the Appendix to the second Report from the Select Committee on South Australia, 1841.

*Mr. Stephen to the Commissioners.—21st Feb., 1838.*

"Gentlemen.—Your letter of the 22nd December, urging the recall of Governor Hindmarsh from South Australia, has engaged Lord Glenelg's most careful and anxious consideration. In deliberating on that suggestion he has felt himself bound to consider with the utmost attention the various matters laid to the charge of that officer, and he now directs me to communicate to you the result.

The name of Captain Hindmarsh was originally submitted to his late Majesty for the office which he at present fills, in deference to your opinion of his capacity for such a trust. Although personally unknown to Lord Glenelg, his character in his profession stood extremely high, and he was strongly recommended by one of the oldest and most distinguished naval officers under whom he had served. Under such circumstances Lord Glenelg was gratified to have it in his power to call him to a situation of trust and emolument in the civil service of the crown. \* \* \*

As you are charged with the chief responsibility of executing this new experiment in colonization, his Lordship is unwilling to withhold from you the means which you deliberately pronounce indispensable to the due discharge of the trust committed to you. \* \* \*

Her Majesty's pleasure will, therefore, be signified to Captain Hindmarsh, that he should retire from the government of South Australia. \* \* \*

His lordship will be happy to receive, and will carefully weigh any recommendation which you may be disposed to make as to the choice of Captain Hindmarsh's successor in the office which will thus become vacant."

*Colonel Torrens (Chairman) to Mr. Stephen.—31st March, 1838.*

"Sir.—In reference to your letter of the 21st instant, expressing Lord Glenelg's desire of receiving, with as little delay as possible, the recommendation of the Colonization Commissioners of a candidate for the office of

Perhaps the most curious part of this speech is that in which Sir A. Molesworth undertakes to show how advantageously the two millions per annum he proposes to save from the colonial expenditure, might be used in promoting emigration from the United Kingdom to the colonies. He observes [speech p. 38], that with that sum "we might send annually to Australia, 150,000 persons, and to Canada twice that number." The present expense of sending a man to Canada is about £5, and to Australia about £20. These numbers, therefore, are wrong: they should be about 100,000 to Australia, and four times as many to Canada. Sir William, however, keeps out of sight the laws of supply and demand. The highest number of emigrants ever yet sent to the Australian colonies in one year, was 32,600 (in 1841); and the highest number sent to the North American colonies in a year 109,600 (in 1847). To treble, or even to double, the demand for shipping, would hardly fail to increase the cost of passage. Again, the demand for labour in the colonies, though great, is not unlimited; and to push government

Governor of South Australia, the Commissioners have the honour to state that they have, by an *unanimous* vote of their board, adopted the resolution to submit the name of Lieut.-Colonel George Gawler to Lord Glenelg, as the candidate whom they recommend as the successor of Captain Hindmarsh." \* \* \*

*Mr. Stephen to the Commissioners—3rd April, 1838.*

"Gentlemen, I have laid before Lord Glenelg, Colonel Torrens' letter of the 31st ultimo, intimating that you have, by an unanimous vote of the board, adopted the resolution to submit the name of Lieut.-Colonel George Gawler to his Lordship, as the candidate whom you would recommend as the successor of Captain Hindmarsh. Lord Glenelg has perused with much satisfaction the high testimonials to the character and qualifications of Col. Gawler, and his Lordship will have great pleasure in submitting the name of that officer to the Queen, for the appointment of Governor of South Australia."

At the suggestion of the Commissioners the offices of Governor and of Resident Commissioner were united in the person of Colonel Gawler; and the Commissioners had, therefore, full power under the Act of Parliament of conveying to him their instructions on financial subjects. That power was rendered complete by the following circumstance:—

In the year 1836 a question had been raised by the Colonisation Commissioners as to the degree of control vested in them by the Act of Parliament over the funds raised under the provisions of that Act for the expenses of the Colony. The opinion of the law-officers of the Crown was taken by the Board of Treasury, and it was decided that the control over such funds rested solely with the Commissioners.—*Vide Correspondence above referred to, pp. 63-68.*

emigration beyond that limit, would only be to accumulate a mass of pauperism in the colonies the support of which from British funds could not be avoided.

But let these objections be waived. What benefit would the people of the United Kingdom derive from this extended emigration? To expect that it would materially change the mean density of the home population is to look for the abrogation of a natural law. It has now long been established as a fact, that a diminution of the population by emigration is invariably followed by an increase of births.\* But, it may be said, if the population of the colonies were increased by the addition of 3 or 400,000 emigrants annually, the quantity of our produce consumed by them would increase in the same proportion. Perhaps it would; but there are two reasons for doubting it. The first is, that by the same law under which an artificial reduction of the population tends to increase the number of births, an artificial addition to it tends to diminish them; and so if the labour market of the colonies were kept as fully supplied as that at home, their natural increase would probably be slower than it is; and so the number of consumers would not increase in the assumed proportion. The other reason is, that the colonies, if fully supplied with labour, would contain fewer rich and more poor consumers—in other words, the *average* surplus of income per head applicable to the purchase of imported commodities would be smaller, and so result in a smaller demand per head. Further, the state emigration thus promoted could only be a source of gain so far as it constituted an addition to that previously sustained from private resources. And as the average number of emigrants, without the aid of the state, has been during the three years 1845-6-7 upwards of 160,000, and very few of these would pay for their own passages were the government prepared to send out twice that number at the expense of the state, the net result of giving free passages to (say) 300,000 persons, would be only to add about 140,000 to the previous

\* Vide Malthus on Population, 5th Ed. II, 116.

number, and to put more than half the money expended into the pockets of individuals.

This, however, is not the point of view in which Sir W. Molesworth's recommendations of increased emigration appear to the least advantage. It may be shown, without using other data than those he has himself furnished in this part of his speech, that emigration, as it is now proceeding *without* aid from the state, is likely, if left undisturbed, to remove the surplus population of the United Kingdom to the colonies quite as fast as can be beneficial for either. At page 36 is the following passage :—

“To show the utility of colonies as outlets for our population, I may refer to the reports of the emigration commissioners, from which it appears that in the course of the last twenty years, 1,673,803 persons have emigrated from this country, of whom 825,564 went to the United States, 702,101 to the North American colonies, 127,188 to the Australian colonies, and 19,090 to other places. It would be interesting to know what has been the cost of this emigration, and how it has been defrayed. I cannot put it down at less than £20,000,000 sterling, of which about £1,500,000 were paid out of the proceeds of land sales in the Australian colonies. This emigration has varied considerably in amount from year to year—from the minimum of 26,092 persons in 1828, to the maximum of 258,270 persons last year. If averages of five years be taken, it appears to have gone on steadily increasing in amount; for on the average of the five years ending with 1832, it amounted to 60,000 persons a year; ending with 1837, to 66,000 persons a year; ending with 1842, to 86,000 persons a year; and ending with 1847, to 121,000 persons a year. Therefore, the habit of emigrating is confirmed, and becoming more powerful every day; and, therefore, colonies are becoming more useful as outlets for our population.”

The material facts here stated are—1st. That during the last twenty years (1828-47) 1,673,803 persons have emigrated from the United Kingdom; and 2nd. That, if these twenty years be divided into four periods of five years each, a progressive increase of great regularity is shown in the numbers emigrating. Whence it is inferred that this progressive increase will go on.

The proposition may be more fully expressed thus: That, as in four equal periods past the average number emigrating



annually was 60,000, 66,000, 86,000 and 121,000 respectively, so in the four next periods of equal duration the average numbers will, in all probability, be 169,000, 228,000, 296,000, and 371,000, or thereabouts. Granting this, it follows that as in the twenty years (1828-47) the total number of emigrants was 1,673,000, the number will, in the next twenty years (1848-67) be about 5,420,000. Now, the population of the United Kingdom increased from 21,282,000 in 1821 to 27,019,000 in 1841 : showing an addition of 5,737,000. In the next twenty years, at the same rate of increase, the number added would be about 7,259,000. Against the former addition there was an emigration of only 1,673,000 or 29 per cent. ; but against the latter, according to Sir W. Molesworth's calculation, it is probable there will be an emigration of 5,420,000, or 74 per cent. ; *and this without the aid of the state.* Whence, then, the need for such aid ?

The essential conditions of emigration, past or present, seem to be too generally disregarded. There are two principal fields open to the English emigrant—one in the North American and the other in the Australian colonies. The demand for labour is by much the greater in the latter ; and seems likely long to continue so. But the difficulty of "bridging the ocean" in these two directions varies considerably. The inevitable outfit and the sea passage to North America cost, as I have observed, about £5 a man, seldom more. To Australia, the outlay is £20 or £21. A man who by any means gets a free passage to North America has, himself, to pay some 30s. or £2 for outfit, &c. ; if he goes to Australia he must find £5 or £6.\* Thus, whether independent or aided, the emigrant has a strong motive for preferring America ; and the government, in acting with British funds, whether it regarded the general necessity for economy of expenditure, or the number that could be provided for with a given sum, would be under the influence of a similar prefer-

\* It may be here observed that there are no free passages granted by the government to North America ; nor is there, in that country, any land fund applicable to emigration.

ence. Now, emigration to the North American colonies has recently been pushed quite to its proper limits. The number landed cannot find employment, and so generally pass into the United States. But success there, often requires a long and tedious journey, each band of immigrants finding the demand for labour, near the frontiers, more or less supplied by their predecessors. Access to the ports of the United States is rendered difficult by special regulations, intended to save the towns from an influx of paupers. The propriety of extending the field for the settlement of immigrants into Canada has (as reference to the papers from time to time laid before Parliament will prove) occupied the attention of Lord Grey ever since he took office in 1846. It is abundantly evident to every unprejudiced observer, that he has never lost an opportunity of pressing upon the attention of the provincial government his opinions in favour of a more regular and systematic occupation of their territory; and he has proposed several specific measures for their adoption, having this end in view. But finding that successive governors, executive councils, the provincial parliament, and the land companies,—all those, in short, who have most local knowledge and experience,—deem what he proposes impracticable, and holding that “this is a subject upon which the Canadians have a right to demand, that their views and their judgment, not those of the British government should prevail;”<sup>\*</sup> his lordship has, in perfect consistency with the policy he advocated before taking office, forborne to press the adoption of the measures sanctioned by his own judgment.<sup>†</sup>

Sir W. Molesworth recommends [Speech, p. 37] the raising of funds “wherewith to convey the poorer classes to the colonies,” by “the well known plan of Mr. Wakefield.” He

<sup>\*</sup> Vide Earl Grey’s reply to Lord Monteagle on this subject, in the House of Lords, 10th August, 1848.—pp. 42-3.

<sup>†</sup> The reasons which determined Lord Grey to abandon his scheme, formed and communicated to Lord Elgin about the end of 1846, for establishing village settlements for British immigrants into Canada, will be found fully stated in his lordship’s despatch of 29th January, 1847, printed in the Appendix to the Seventh Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners (1847).

is of course aware that this plan is already embodied in the Land Sales' Act (5 & 6 Vict. c. 36), and, so far, has been for some years, in regular operation. Probably he would enforce its adoption in some more strict form. But that would hardly be consistent with any degree of attention to the wishes of the colonists; seeing that in the Report of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, on immigration, received from the Governor last March, "the system of Mr. E. G. Wakefield" is denounced as "ruinous" to the colony. Thus it would seem that either "self-government" or "the Wakefield System" must here give way.

The steps taken during the last two seasons to promote and facilitate emigration from the United Kingdom, to the North American and Australian colonies, and also to the Cape of Good Hope, will be found described in the two last (seventh and eighth) Reports of the Emigration Commissioners, and in the supplementary papers on emigration presented during the last and present sessions.\*

Regarding this speech as a whole, it may be said that Sir W. Molesworth is here scarcely ever accurate or complete in his statement of facts—that in his argument he does not venture to embrace the only conclusion justified by his premises—and that all he proposes (apart from his suggestion of an enquiry) is to attain at once, by impracticable means, what is already being attained, as rapidly as may be, by practicable ones. Of inaccuracy and insufficiency of statement upon nearly every material point, I have adduced evidence, of the value of which the reader will form his own opinion. To show how inevitably a rigid adherence to logical accuracy, in arguing from Sir W. Molesworth's estimate of what our colonies cost us, and what they are worth, to the course most expedient for us now to pursue, we must arrive at the con-

\* As to the North American colonies, vide papers presented in February, June and December, 1847, and April, June, July and August 1848; and as to the Australian colonies the papers presented 20th December 1847 and 10th August 1848.

clusion that the sooner we abandon them the better, were needless. But of the extent to which the principle of delegating powers of self-government to the colonies, and requiring them in return to defray the expense of that government, has actually been carried into practice, especially during the last two years, it may be desirable, before concluding, to afford the reader some evidence,

First, then, as to the North American Colonies. In Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, the system of "responsible government" may be said to be already completely established. So well is this known, indeed, to all who are acquainted, in any degree, with the published documents, that to offer proof of it, beyond a reference to those documents, is unnecessary.

It is equally notorious that in Canada, from the period of the union of the provinces until lately, great difficulties have been met with in carrying on the government upon the new system. Even Lord Metcalfe, great as were his abilities, did not succeed in making the plan of administration by means of a council enjoying the confidence of the Assembly work in a satisfactory manner. By Lord Elgin, acting under the instructions he has received from Earl Grey, this has been accomplished. The governor now has the confidence of all parties and races in Canada. He is regarded, like the Sovereign at home, as belonging to no political party; but as exercising the power committed to him for the general benefit of all, without distinction. Shortly after the opening of the Assembly, in the beginning of the present year, on a vote of want of confidence in the Provincial Administration, the Executive Council was changed without hesitation; and the change was at once approved and confirmed by the Home Government; and the despatches of Lord Elgin\* leave not the shadow of a doubt that the present council receive from him, equally with their predecessors, all due confidence and support. The consequences are seen in the feelings of con-

\* Vide Commons Return, No. 621, Session 1848.

tent and loyalty prevailing throughout the country. The news of the French revolution, had it reached Canada two years sooner, could not but have given rise to a dangerous degree of excitement; whereas it actually caused less disturbance there than in England. The French section of the population gave prompt expression to its feelings on the occasion in a presentment by the Grand Jury of Montreal,\* and the address to the Queen, on her birth-day, from London, Canada West, affords an equally gratifying proof of the contented and loyal sentiments of the people generally.

An examination of the financial condition of Canada during and since the introduction of responsible government does not lead to the conclusion that the change of system has produced any material alteration, either in the amount raised by taxation, or in the purposes to which it has been applied. In each of the five years, 1842-1846, the provincial revenue yielded a large balance of income over expenditure, after full payment of the ordinary and incidental expenses of the government and legislature, the payment of the interest of the public debt, the redemption of a portion, and the appropriation of a large sum annually for the promotion of education, and for various purposes of benevolence and public utility. The expenses of the civil list, which in 1842 amounted to £74,566, were in 1846, £77,152; and during the same period

\* Printed, as presented, in French, in the papers laid before Parliament respecting the alterations of the Union Act. The following is a translation:—

“The Grand Jury cannot help expressing the happiness which they feel at finding the country rejoicing in a profound and tranquil peace, whilst the people of Europe are engaged in troubles, and in the midst of revolution. This peace which our country enjoys, which it knows how to appreciate, and will study to maintain, is owing to the form of our government; and, above all, to the wisdom, the intelligence, and the resolution of those men who have been selected to administer the public affairs of the colony by the representative of our Sovereign. With such men at the head of affairs, careful as they are of the interests of all classes without distinction, the country must prosper, and enjoy this peace, so necessary to the development of its industry and its commerce. The Grand Jury feels persuaded that a peace so necessary to the happiness of the country will never be obscured, and the government may rely upon the sympathy and the cordial and sincere support of all the inhabitants.—*Grand Jury Room, Montreal, 29th April, 1848.*”

the total annual expenditure for purposes of government and legislation was increased from £117,379 to £153,464.\*

In Nova Scotia, and in New Brunswick, the administration of the government upon the regular constitutional principles thus adopted in Canada, is not only recognised as just in theory, but has been brought into practical operation in the most satisfactory manner. As to Nova Scotia, the whole purport of Lord Grey's private despatch to Sir John Harvey of 3rd November, 1846,† on the course proper to be adopted in cases of difference between the legislature and the executive, may be read in the recommendation to the governor to "make it apparent that any transfer which may take place of political power from the hands of one party in the province to those of another is the result not of an act of yours, but of the wishes of the people themselves, as shown by the difficulty experienced by the retiring party in carrying on the government of the province according to the forms of the constitution." Similarly, when addressing the Governor in March, 1847, on the same subject, Lord Grey enforced these views by pointing out the method of their application, so as, notwithstanding some serious practical difficulties then anticipated by Sir John Harvey, to keep the direction of the internal policy of the colony faithfully in the hands of those who might, for the time being, enjoy the confidence of the provincial parliament. At the opening of the Assembly in January last an opportunity of acting upon these instructions was produced by

\* A comparison of the accounts of 1842 and 1846 will sufficiently illustrate the progressive changes made in the interim. The following are the principal items on each side of the accounts of the Receiver General for each of these years :—

	1842.	1846.
<b>RECEIPTS.</b>		
Income from Consolidated and Incidental Funds .	£399,477	£493,158
<b>EXPENDITURE.</b>		
Purposes of Government and Legislation . . . . .	£117,379	£153,464
Redemption of public debt, and interest on loans .	91,954	133,156
Education, benevolence, and miscellaneous objects	65,639	146,052
	£274,972	£382,672

† Vide Commons Return, No. 621, Session 1848, p. 8.

a vote of want of confidence in the existing council; and in spite of obstructions arising from the sudden removal of officers previously regarded as permanent, and whose emoluments and prospects were thus interfered with, the council was changed in accordance with the will of the Assembly. According to the last published despatches from Sir John Harvey, the course thus adopted by the Home Government has given the utmost satisfaction throughout the colony.

Precisely the same instructions appear to have been given by Lord Grey to Sir E. Head, for his guidance in the government of New Brunswick. According to the published correspondence already referred to, the House of Assembly of that colony having, in February last, addressed the governor requesting to be furnished with copies of any despatches he might have received from Lord Grey "relative to the tenure of public office in this province, or upon the subject of responsible government," and having been furnished therewith, passed, by a committee of the whole house, a resolution expressly approving of the principles therein laid down.

In these colonies (Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) the payment of their own civil establishments has long been the general rule; and it appears that it is now to be more fully acted upon.\*

Newfoundland and Prince Edward's Island are not under the same system of government, the population of each being still too small, and the general circumstances of the colonies being obviously not fitted for its application: both, however, have representative legislatures, elected under a most popular qualification.† Both, also, have recently become less expensive to the mother country. In 1838 Newfoundland appeared upon the annual estimates for £23,800; this charge has now

\* In 1828 the vote by parliament for Nova Scotia and Sable Island, was £10,445; in 1838, it was £4,900. The only expense for several years now has been £400 a year for the establishment maintained at Sable Island for shipwrecked persons; and as they are almost exclusively British ships that are benefited by this, the charge cannot be properly regarded as colonial. New Brunswick appeared upon the estimates of 1828 for £3,600 a year; this charge has now entirely disappeared. *Vide Earl Grey's Evidence before the Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, 23rd June, 1848—p. 537.*

† *Vide Return "Colonies,"—No. 740, Session 1847.*

disappeared altogether. And it appears by Lord Grey's evidence the other day before the committee on the miscellaneous estimates,\* that after the present year the only charge to be defrayed by this country, for Prince Edward's Island, will be the salary of the governor, and a pension, granted many years ago, to a former governor. Thus an immediate saving will be effected, in the next year's estimate, of one third of the present amount; and when the pension referred to shall fall in, it will be reduced to about one-half what it now is.

It is apparent upon the face of the papers before Parliament that in all the other colonies the same general principles have, of late years, been kept steadily in view, and that during the last two years considerable progress has been made towards bringing them into full operation; though, from the state of society and the nature of existing arrangements in many of those colonies this progress is necessarily slow, and may not even be apparent to those whose enquiries on the subject are satisfied with a superficial glance at the news of the day.

What Sir W. Molesworth says of the New Zealand Charter of 1846 is, generally, true enough in point of fact; but then it is only half the truth, and that the worst half. That the constitution proposed to be conferred upon this colony was "nondescript," and that it was sent off "post-haste," are not, I conceive, very serious charges against it; yet these are really all that are made. No description of it would be true which did not state that it embodied, substantially, the principles recommended by Sir W. Molesworth. Governor Grey's objections to it are fully detailed in his despatch of 3rd May, 1847;† they were based upon local knowledge not possessed in this country; it is not suggested that they were in any degree insufficient; and it must be admitted that in yielding to them Lord Grey acknowledged in the most direct and explicit manner the necessity of so framing a colonial constitution,

\* Question, No. 6905.

† Vide "Papers relative to the affairs of New Zealand," presented to Parliament in December, 1847, pp. 42-47.



purporting to be of a representative character, as to make it truly what it professes to be. That the one referred to was not originally so framed, is to be accounted for mainly by the fact that it was the first attempt ever made to include together under one franchise, as the common basis of such a government, the suffrages of European settlers and those of a semi-civilized native population; the latter being still, by far, the most numerous.

Sir William's complaint, in the very next sentence, that a draft of a constitution has been sent to New South Wales, in order to elicit the opinions of the colonists beforehand, is whimsical enough. He would not have the peculiar circumstances of the colony considered before its constitution is prepared, and he cannot tolerate the inconvenience of having to consider them afterwards. Would he have them considered at all?

Excepting Western Australia and New Zealand, the Australian colonies all now defray the cost of their own civil establishments. Western Australia is but just beginning to recover from the consequences of the errors committed at the period of its first settlement in 1829.\* In New Zealand the revenue is increasing much more rapidly than the expenditure; and Lord Grey has stated that he expects the colony will shortly support its own civil establishment, leaving only the salaries of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor to be borne by the Home-Government.†

\* "Unfortunately that colony is the only one of the Australian colonies which has always been in a very languishing state. The immense extent of land unfortunately granted away when it was first founded has been a dead weight about it ever since; but I think it is now beginning to turn the corner; it is beginning to pay a part of its debt. We have received lately intimation that the debt they had standing to the military chest is beginning to be paid. The revenue is decidedly improving, and I hope that in a very short time it may be able to pay the expenses of its own establishment. They have made some important discoveries of additional resources of late years; particularly a considerable trade is springing up in sandal wood; they are exporting it to Singapore and China with great advantage." *Vide Evidence of Earl Grey, before referred to—Question 6919.*

† "They have been given to understand, that as soon as they had a representative legislature, they would be expected to vote the expenses of their establishment." *Vide Earl Grey's Evidence, before referred to,—Q. 6934.*

The reduction of government expenditure which took place in New South Wales immediately after the Representative Assembly of that colony received the control of the revenue and its appropriation, in 1843, stated by Sir W. Molesworth as an instance of the superior economy of self-government,\* must be received with due regard to some other circumstances. The years 1843 and 1844 were years of extreme depression in that colony. The ordinary revenue, which in 1842 amounted to £372,185, fell, in 1843, to £296,884, and in 1844 to £266,724. Under such circumstances the Representative Assembly used its power, in the first instance, very naturally, to reduce expenditure; and they did it in a very sweeping manner. The largest saving (about £20,000) was made in the items of police and gaols alone. No less than seventeen police magistrates appear to have been dismissed. This change, though found afterwards to be greater than was quite consistent with true economy, was facilitated by the rapid diminution then taking place in the number of convicts in the colony—transportation thither having ceased in 1840. The effect of this upon the general population was noticed by the governor in his annual report for 1844: he there observes that notwithstanding an increase in the total population, by births and immigration, of about 10,000 per annum, there had been in 1843, and again in 1844, a positive decrease in the numbers of the *adult* population, both male and female; and he imagined that this could only be attributed to the dying off of convicts.† But whatever its cause, the fact being ascertained, it is clear that as the expenses of governing a colony like New South Wales, especially in respect of police, gaols, and such matters,

\* "In 1841 the free population of New South Wales amounted to about 102,000, and the ordinary expenditure, exclusive of immigration, was £350,000, or at the enormous rate of £3 4s. a head of the population. In 1843 the Representative Assembly at once diminished the expenditure for the subsequent year by £60,000; and in 1846, when the free population amounted to 178,000, the expenditure was only £254,000, or at the rate of £1 8s. a head of the population. This extraordinary reduction in the rate of expenditure may be attributed, to a certain extent, to immigration, but the reduction in the positive amount of expenditure can be distinctly traced to the commencement of local self-government in 1843."—*Speech* p. 27.

† Blue Book, 1845, p. 130.

so far as it is dependent on the number of the population, must have reference to the adults, it is anything but surprising to find, whatever the form of the government, that under the pressure of a declining revenue, and pending a positive diminution of the adult population, the government expenditure was reduced. The increase of the population by additions to the number of children, also illustrates, in a striking manner, the general fallacy of Sir W. Molesworth's mode of computing the rate of expenditure at so much per head.

The general policy and the practice of the Colonial Office, under Lord Grey, in regard to the contributions of this country to the *civil* expenditure of the colonies, are so fully and clearly described in his lordship's evidence before the recent committee, that it is needless to say anything of them here.\*

\* As it seems to be a part of Sir W. Molesworth's proposed plan of "self-government" to permit the colonies to elect their own governors and other functionaries, and to pay them what salaries they think fit, [speech p. 24] and as the amount of the salaries now given to governors is particularly objected to as extravagant, [speech p. 23], I append an extract from Earl Grey's evidence bearing directly upon, and very clearly illustrating, the grounds of our colonial policy upon these points:—

6888. The estimate, No. 5, includes almost all the colonial services; these votes, many of them, have been upon the estimates for a considerable number of years, and they have been probably subjected to very little inquiry on the part of the Colonial-office since your Lordship's tenure of that department; but I wish to ask your Lordship a general question as to many of them, whether you have ever considered the possibility and the expediency of putting them off these estimates, and throwing them either in great proportion or entirely upon the colonies themselves, for whose services they are voted?—I have always considered them, as far as the civil establishments of the colonies are concerned, to be expenses that ought properly, unless there are special reasons against it, to be generally defrayed by the colonies themselves, and in the last few years very great progress has been made towards arriving at that result, and comparatively a very small number of salaries are now charged to this country for the civil establishments in the colonies; I think that there is a rapid progress towards reducing the charges which are still left. There are some things which I think ought always to be charged upon this country; I may also say that although it is not the practice, in my opinion it is very unfortunate that it is not the practice that in all cases the salaries of the governors should be paid by this country; there is no other part of the civil establishments which I think ought to be so paid, but I think it would be extremely desirable, for political reasons, if an arrangement could be made by which the colonies could take certain other expenses upon themselves, and the salaries of the governors be always paid by this country.

6889. Will your Lordship have the goodness to state your reasons for so thinking?—My reason for that opinion is this, that in order to have efficient persons in the situation of governors, it is necessary that their salaries should

The *naval* expenditure for the colonies, or the excess of expenditure in this form, under the present system, beyond what would be necessary for the due protection of our interests abroad, were the colonies abandoned, is not easily estimated; but from the attempts I have myself made, I feel confident

bear some considerable proportion to what men of eminence in other careers obtain in this country; you cannot expect that a man of eminence will accept the situation of governor of a colony, if as a commissioner at home, or a lawyer, or a merchant, or anything else, he can obtain a much larger income; if he cannot live fairly upon his salary, and make some saving for the time when he returns home, you can hardly expect persons in that station of life whom it is desirable to appoint, and of that political experience especially, to accept those offices; but if salaries sufficient to secure such services are given to the governors, and are paid by the colonies, in the colonies, they are compared with the incomes of persons there; the general scale of income which people enjoy in the colonies is notoriously very much less than in this country, and the consequence is, that inadequate salaries are given to the governors; there is frequently great dissatisfaction; I cannot help saying that I think many of the governors are exceedingly underpaid.

6890. Generally speaking, your Lordship considers the scale of the salaries of the governors of our colonies insufficient?—I think so; I think it is extremely good economy to give liberal salaries to governors, because the more experience I have of colonial affairs, the more convinced I am that practically it is necessary to give a very wide discretion to governors, and that I believe the best principle to go upon is to select the best governors that can be obtained, and then to rely upon them, and to support their measures as far as possible, and that to attempt to conduct the details of the administration from this country is absolutely impracticable.

6891. Is it not, in point of fact, extremely difficult to provide persons that are competent to govern the colonies from this deficiency in the salaries?—It is extremely difficult; and that difficulty particularly applies to colonies having Representative Assemblies, because in dealing with Representative Assemblies I cannot too strongly express my opinion of the great advantage to the governor of having had a little experience in political life here, and knowing something of the House of Commons and the way in which political affairs are carried on in this country; but the salaries that most of our governors have, are such that gentlemen who are of any considerable standing in political life, and are looking forward to obtaining distinction in politics at home, will not accept colonial appointments.

6891\*. Without reference to any individual, either now appointed or likely to be appointed, does it not stand to reason that the scale of payments that we have adopted for our governors abroad, confines your choice either to persons of the military or naval profession, or to persons whose circumstances are such that in this country they are unable to fill the stations with dignity and propriety in which they stand?—To a considerable extent, undoubtedly that is true; there are particular cases in which persons not coming within that description have accepted appointments of that kind; but certainly the scale of remuneration for colonial governors does very much narrow the range of choice.

6892. Are not those other persons to whom you allude, generally persons whose zeal for particular colonies, or for particular objects, induces them to accept those appointments?—Almost entirely.—*Commons Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, 1848.*

that it cannot be justly stated at more than a very small amount. The naval expenditure commonly ascribed to the colonies is, as I have endeavoured to show, for the most part devoted to the protection of our foreign commerce.

As to the *military* expenditure for the colonies, that, like the civil expenditure, is undergoing considerable reductions under the policy now pursued by the Colonial Office. In order, however, to a due appreciation of the change thus in progress, it is requisite to distinguish between two different classes of colonies—those the military protection of which directly and immediately affects the interests of the mother-country, and those requiring protection chiefly or entirely for themselves. In the Australian colonies, and in the Cape colony, (excepting the military station at Cape Town,) any attacks the colonists may be exposed to will probably be only for the sake of plunder. Their connection with this country is to them rather a source of safety than the reverse. Hence they may be justly required mainly to defend themselves. In accordance with this principle, it appears that Lord Grey has lately reduced the garrison of New South Wales, informing the legislature, in answer to objections to this, and to applications for fortifications for the town of Sydney, that if they want farther protection they must pay for it themselves. And it seems the same course is intended to be adopted towards New Zealand, as soon as the state of affairs in that colony shall render it practicable. The actual reduction of the force at the Cape, and the express understanding now come to with the colonists that they are henceforward to defray the cost of their own defence, I have already adverted to.

Malta and the Mauritius are held rather as fortresses than as colonies, and, therefore, though both contribute something to their military expenditure, it does not appear unreasonable that the greater part of it should be borne by this country. And the same rule applies to the North American colonies; any attack made upon which would most probably be directed against the interests and the power of this country, rather than dictated by any hostile feelings against the colonies themselves,

Hence the expediency and the justice of our bearing the expense of the fortifications and garrisons maintained for their defence.

Of the merely military or maritime stations nothing need be added to what has already been said.

To affirm that our colonial system is without fault, or even to deny that after all possible allowances there is still much to be alleged against it, would be absurd.

It is, undoubtedly, in many respects, defective, and, though now being rapidly improved, must for years to come afford matter for condemnation. But for reformers of the mettle of Sir W. Molesworth the truth is seldom strong enough; and in seeking to heighten they are apt to destroy its effect. Becoming unjust, they become also inconsistent; and by strained efforts to overthrow evils often insure them a longer existence. When Sir William would appear to describe the colonies as they are, he draws only from the worst features of the past; and when he would tell us what they ought to be, he points to examples which have really never had existence. And the reckless manner he displays in seeking to destroy he carries equally into the work of construction. He recommends uncontrolled self-government, yet would forbid independence; and would reserve sovereign power to the Home Government, yet would not, apparently, allow it to be exercised, either by the legislature or by the executive. And finally, he would save public expenditure by doubling private expenditure on the same object; and would promote emigration by superseding individual enterprise, and by throwing every unoccupied colonial territory into the hands of the first comer. Again, with an inconsistency which would seem strange were it not paralleled in many other places in the same speech, he takes considerable pains (Speech, p. 35) to convince the House of Commons that it knows nothing, and can know nothing, of colonial affairs, and directly afterwards urges it to affirm a resolution in favour of a great

and immediate change in the method of conducting these affairs. Similarly, while affirming the public ignorance of the colonies, he appeals to public opinion about them as bearing out his assertion that they are ill-governed. Even the colonial office, he says, "labours under an impossibility of forming a correct judgment with regard to colonial affairs," yet he, himself, has no hesitation in saying how they would be best managed.

It is but too true that the House of Commons, or the public, know very little of our colonial system. It is seldom that they hear so much about it as Sir W. Molesworth has contrived to tell them in a single speech. It is also true that, in this as in some other important matters, the strength of opinions is for the most part in the inverse ratio of the knowledge on which they are founded. The public, knowing little or nothing of the colonial system, has, accordingly, been led to entertain a profound conviction that it is anything but what it ought to be. And upon this common opinion, as upon a vantage ground unassailable except by that most difficult of tasks—the dispelling of an ignorance which believes itself knowledge—the party with which Sir W. Molesworth is leagued takes its stand.

Perhaps they are of opinion that a popular delusion of this kind, too vaguely founded to be readily argued down, and always at the service of anybody disposed to have a fling at the Colonial Office, is serviceable, as tending to induce additional circumspection in the conduct of that department of the government. But I think it may be reasonably doubted whether a real reform ever was promoted by such means. It is abundantly certain that systematically to weaken the hands of the Government, in any department, is an evil—one which may sometimes be counterbalanced by a consequent improvement in the system of Government—but always in itself a serious injury to the state. Never, however, was there a more meagre prospect of public gain from any such process than that presented by the recent efforts to cry down our present colonial policy. A less reasonable, or more purely factious, movement never was made. The most able and

active of the colonial reformers of the day are in office, and at work—what they have done and are doing is obvious to all who choose to look for it—and it is accompanied with ample evidence that no will has been wanting on their part to the accomplishment of more. To stand aside and find fault with everything that is not understood, will not help them, if right, or correct them, if wrong. And if they have indeed been corrupted, then what hope have we? If Lord Grey, and Mr. Hawes, and Mr. Buller, have so fallen away, whom shall we trust? Sir W. Molesworth? Or is it only “the system”—that phrase most convenient for whatever is to be condemned without being comprehended—that is in fault? Then, at least, let a presentable substitute be tendered. That offered by Sir W. Molesworth, as we have seen, will not bear inspection.

THE END.



