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11, 77 The British Empire

EMIGRATION.

A PAPER

READ AT THE

BURDETT HALL, LIMEHOUSE,

BY THE

REV. CHARLES B. GIBSON, M.R.I.A.,

ON

MARCH 30TH, 1868.

“And they said, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. * * *
And let us build us a city and tower, whose top may reach unto heaven,
* * * lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”—Gen. xi. 3, 4.

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EMIGRATION.

My object in writing the paper I am now about to read, is, not merely to direct those intending to emigrate, but also to instruct the public mind on the subject of emigration. The emigrant views emigration simply as the means of improving his own condition; the public are supposed to take a wider and more philosophical view of the subject—but I fear the public view is rather hazy and indistinct; and so long as this is the case, it is idle to expect any decided action on the part of our statesmen, who, as a rule, are influenced by “pressure from without.” The horse, or engine, which we call public opinion, is *behind* the state car in which these gentlemen sit.

It is my intention, at some future time, to publish—or at least print—the paper I now hold in my hand; but I do not think it amiss to ventilate the subject, first, in the form of a lecture; and I know of no better time to do so than the present, nor of a better place than the East of London, where so many are idle and starving.

My introductory remarks had gone so far, at the time the paper was read. What follows, in the way of introduction, was written after the reading.

It is only right that I should state, that, both before and since the reading of this paper, something has been done, and well done, in the emigration line, by the East-end Emigration Society. The *St. Lawrence* left the port of London, for Canada, carrying about 150 emigrants, on the 23rd of April, 1868; and the *Thames*, on the 23rd of May, 1868, carrying 176 emigrants to the same colony. “As to the future,” writes the Rev. Mr. Kitto (June 13th), “I can give no information, for the simple reason that I possess none. I fear that we shall not be able to send any more to Canada this season, but the Committee have not yet come to any decision in the matter. We have been trying, in vain, to arrange, to send to St. John’s, New Brunswick.”

Miss Rye sailed in the *Hibernia*, from the port of Liverpool, on the 28th of May last, with 110 single women, 8 families, and 11 young men. She says, in her note to the *Standard*, written just before starting, "Montreal, London, Hamilton, Peterborough, Toronto, and Ottawa, are all looking out for us, and asking for a share."

It is sad to think that what they require, and we have to spare—that is, labor—cannot, for want of funds, be put in the right place: that which is poverty and weakness to us, would be riches and strength to them.

The general objection, or argument, against "sending away the bone and muscle of the country" has very little bone and muscle in the shape of argument about it. People without employment very soon lose their bone and muscle, and the only thing that remains in vigor is a hungry stomach. Relieve the labour market, give sufficient employment and fair wages to working men, and good food to their growing children, and you will have plenty of bone and muscle: only give room, and young oaks will grow up to supply the place of those that are removed.

We learn, as we go to press, from the "*Standard*," and other sources—and here we take the opportunity of saying, that the poor of the East of London owe a deep debt of gratitude to the "*Standard*," for the way in which it has advocated their cause;—we learn from the "*Standard*," and other sources, that Canada is complaining that it is not the bone and muscle we are sending them, but the refuse and the worthless; and this, along with the death of Mr. Buchanan, the late superintendent of the emigration movement in Canada, has produced a hitch in our colonial emigration machinery, the colonists refusing to convey the emigrants inland. We are assured, by the Rev. Mr. Kitto, that this difficulty will soon be removed, "full instructions having been given on this head;" so that the emigrant need fear no lion in the way. The people of Canada have no canine propensities, like the Canaanites; neither are their cities walled up to heaven, but they are ready to receive every honest and industrious emigrant with a *cead millé failthe*. But if they imagine we are going to send them "bone and muscle" *only*, they will find themselves disappointed. Our object should be to emigrate whole families: to send out only the head of the family has not been found to work well. Men sometimes forget that they have left wives and children behind them, who become a permanent burden on the ratepayers.

EMIGRATION.

EMIGRATION, or migration, is the natural necessity of an increasing population: men must either "move on," or stand in each other's way, and quarrel in the labor and food markets. I am disposed to conclude that, during the 1500 or 2000 years which intervened between the creation of man and the flood, there was but little migration, and no emigration; that the antediluvians had not gone beyond the seas, or taken possession of any large island, inasmuch as they knew nothing of a trade or art for which you are so famous in this district, namely, that of ship-building; and that, as the consequence of over-crowding, "*the earth was filled with violence.*"

This is my reading of the 6th chapter of Genesis, but I do not lay too much stress upon it. I am an emigrationist; you must, therefore, receive what I say *cum grano salis*—"with a grain of salt." I might possibly press passages of scripture into the service that would not pass muster with cooler and calmer interpreters.

But if you turn over a few pages of the Book of Genesis, containing a description of the descendants of Noah, after the flood, you meet with this very significant verse: "*And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was PELEG, for in his days was the earth divided.*" PELEG, or PELEGE, in Hebrew, signifies "*division.*" What did this division of the earth mean? Simply and plainly, that God,—who at this early period had given the earth to man to be inhabited,—had, about the time of Peleg's birth, divided it out among the descendants of Noah. This Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided, was the great-great-great-grandson of Noah.

But let us proceed a little further. What do we find in the next chapter, the 11th of Genesis? That the descendants of Noah are "on the move;" that a portion of them—that is, the descendants of Shem—are migrating from the East, to take possession, no doubt, of those parts of the earth that had been marked out for them in the days of Peleg.

Let us see the passage: "*And the whole earth was of one language, and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the East, that they found a plain, in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly; and let us build us a city and tower, whose top may reach to heaven, LEST WE BE SCATTERED ABROAD UPON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH.*"

Now, here we have the first great attempt of man to contravene the intention of God, that he should enter upon and colonize the earth. God says, "Move forward, and possess the whole earth." Man says, "No; we shall stay in this plain of Shinar, for here is clay for bricks. Let us burn them thoroughly, and build us a city, whose top may reach to heaven, lest we be scattered abroad." And thus the foundations of mighty Babylon were laid.

I believe that the gigantic extent of London, or "Modern Babylon," as it is sometimes called, is owing, in no small measure, to our facility in making bricks from "London clay." When and where we shall stop brick-making and building, I shall not venture to say, for the natural tendency of mankind appears to be to large towns, and the larger the town, the more powerful the attraction. The law of gravitation would seem to operate here, as well as in connexion with our planetary system.

But how many who have come up to London, under the impression, like Whittington, that its streets are paved with gold, are miserably disappointed! But, notwithstanding, here they stay, till the bloom of the country fades from their cheek, with the belief that, in so great and rich a city, they cannot possibly starve; but this some have found to be a mistake. There is no better place for starving in than London: you can manage it in a garret, right well.

We have it recorded in Genesis, that God wrought a most extraordinary miracle, to overcome this tendency in mankind to congregate together in large towns: "*And the Lord said, Behold, this people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do. Go to, let us confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence, upon the face of the whole earth.*" Could any means be more simple or effectual? or could any more clear and definite expression of God's will respecting the necessity of migration, or emigration, be given to mankind?

Did it ever strike you, that the faith of Abraham, which is so much lauded in the word of God, was a migrating, or emigrating faith? "*Now, the Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. . . . And Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him.*"

The land to which Abraham went was Palestine, or Canaan, and we conclude that this was a portion of the inheritance marked out, in the days of Peleg, for the ancestors of Abraham, the descendants of Shem. We discern from the preceeding chapter that Terah, Abraham's father, was on his way to the land of Canaan, but, like a great many people, he stopped half-way—at Haran—where he died. It was left to Abraham to carry out God's purposes respecting the location of his family. “*By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go into a place, which he should afterwards receive as an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*”

I have, so far forth, directed your attention to the Bible argument for emigration. Why? Because I hold the Bible to be the oldest, the truest, and the most interesting historical book in the world; because I hold, that, if we do what is in accordance with its dictates, we shall be doing what is in accordance with the will and purposes of God; and that, if we try to do this, God will most certainly bless us. I should like to see you emigrating, with something of the faith of Abraham; going forth to a new country, because you felt it is the right and proper thing to do, and that God would surely bless you and your children, watching over you, by sea and by land, and providing for you what you cannot procure in this country, namely, constant work and remunerative wages.

But to turn to a more general view of the subject. England has done but little, comparatively speaking, in the way of colonizing. The nations of antiquity were far ahead of us in this respect: the necessity of colonizing, with them, was deemed as urgent as is the necessity which presses on an over-stocked beehive to cast a new swarm; and they appear to have arranged their colonies with the same order, each new company having its leader, or queen bee. The Phœnicians, who inhabited the sea-coasts of Palestine and Syria, were among the first emigrants and colonizers of the earth. Carthage, as we learn from Virgil, was a colony from Phœnicia, with poor Dido as its queen bee. With what beauty does Virgil describe the founding of the colony!

Hic portus alii effodiunt; hic alta theatris
 Fundamenta locant alii immanesque columnas
 Rupibus excidunt, scenis decora alta futuris.
 Qualis apes æstate novâ per florea rura,
 Exercet sub sole labor, cum gentis adultos
 Educunt fetus, aut cum liquentia mella
 Stipant, et dulci distendunt nectare cellas,
 Aut onera, accipiunt venientum, aut agmine facto
 Ignavum fucos pecus à præsepibus arcent
 Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella.

—*Æneid, Lib. i., 427-436.*

We offer the following as a free translation:—“Some are engaged in digging a dock [*portus*]; others in laying the foundations of a theatre; others in cutting immense columns out of the solid rock,

ornaments of future buildings. They are like a swarm of bees in early summer, toiling in the fields, beneath the sun. Now you may see them leading out the young, or distending the cells with liquid nectar, or receiving the burdens of those coming home; or, formed into a band, driving the drones from the hive. The work glows, and the fragrant honey is redolent of thyme."

Tyre was another Phœnician colony. So was Leptis Magna, as we learn from Sallust. So was Hippo, Hadrumetum, Utica, and Tunes. The Greeks, at an early period, colonized the numerous islands and sea-coasts of the Mediterranean. The Athenians, Dorians, and Lacedæmonions, were all in the habit of easing the pressure of an over-grown population, by sending out well-equipped companies of colonizers—to Crete, Rhodes, Sicily, Chalcædon, Byzantium, and other places, too numerous to mention.

This great social subject of emigration and colonization is becoming, every day, of more pressing importance; of importance, not only to the laboring classes, who cannot find sufficient employment in this country, but of importance also to the State. We find there is both truth and significance in the words, *Salus populi suprema lex*.

It is to be regretted that *social* subjects very seldom excite the same interest, even in the House of Commons, as subjects of a purely political character. I remember but two great social subjects assuming their proper importance in Parliament during the last thirty-five years, namely, Negro Emancipation and Free Trade. If I were asked to define the difference between a political and a social reform, I should say, that the former is an altering, or a mending, or a tinkering—as the case may be—of the political machine; and that the latter is a *working* of the machine. Political reforms are not, for one moment, to be compared in importance to the alleviation of the actual and pressing wants of the people.

Now, do not misunderstand me: I am no enemy of reform in our political institutions. All I insist on is, that great social questions should take the precedence of purely political questions. The last Reform Bill may turn out a very good, or bad, or indifferent measure, for anything I know; but I do not see how any new arrangement of the franchise will give constant employment, wholesome food, good raiment, and comfortable houses to the poor people of this country.

"But, my dear sir," exclaims some purely political statesman, "it was never intended to do so."

That's the very reason I complain. Don't be eternally mending your machine—tinkering and hammering at it, till you make two holes in stopping one—but *work* it; don't be all day sharpening

your scythe, or your sickle, but put it in among the rich corn, for thousands and tens of thousands, in this country, are in a semi-starving state.

The history of Ireland for the last fifty years presents us with a sad illustration of the folly of depending upon merely *political changes*, for the improvement of the condition of the working classes. The late Daniel O'Connell—styled, in Ireland, the “Liberator”—commenced his career by agitating for Catholic Emancipation, which he carried; but this was a religious, and, to some extent, a social, as well as a political question. He then commenced his agitation for a Repeal of the Legislative Union between England and Ireland. This was to be the top-stone of Irish prosperity; so he continued to agitate, calling off the public mind from great social questions, and especially the grand question of emigration, till his eight or nine millions of people, and his two millions of “fighting men,” were overtaken by a famine, as the chariots and horsemen of Pharoah were overtaken by a flood.

I think that famine broke the large heart of Daniel O'Connell. I saw him, for the last time, at a meeting in the County Cork, convened to see what could be done to meet the fearful emergency. He was then as pale as a ghost, for he saw the fell monster, Famine, or Black Death, descending from the mountain-sides of Cork and Kerry, where it first appeared, towards the towns and villages. I was living in the County Cork at this time, and said, more than once, to my family and friends, “*I would sooner die than pass through the same scenes of misery again.*” The people rushed down upon us, like hungry wolves from the mountains; the faces of some of them were black, but the prevailing hue was that of tanned leather. One million of persons died on that occasion of starvation. I have had to step over a green corpse, lying on the threshold, to get at a dying man inside. Sixty dead bodies, after one night, have been carted from the door of the Cork City Union; and, in some districts, the rates rose to double the rental. Valuable land, in the south-west of Ireland, was sold for a mere song. There is a story told, on good authority, of a gentleman who could not sell a small property, at any figure, offering it to a friend for nothing, and of the friend's declining the gift, when he discovered the amount of the poor rates.

Before the famine, the political agitator and the employer of labor were loud in their praise of an overflowing population; but O'Connell lived long enough to discover that the strength in which he boasted was his weakness; that a large, unemployed population is not the strength, but the weakness of any country or state, as a large, unemployed family is a burden, and not a support to the head of that family; and the labor-master discovered that the labor-market may be *so* full, as to overflow and flood a whole country with

pauperism. Some grand lessons and startling truths in political economy may be still dug up from the *débris* of the Irish famine, which English legislators would do well to study.

It taught the Irish nation a lesson, which they have never forgotten, and which they never will forget—and that is, *that God has given the earth to man TO BE INHABITED*. But it was hard to teach the Irish people this lesson, for an Irishman loves his country just as much as an Englishman loves his. That beautiful elegy, by Campbell, “THE EXILE OF ERIN,” is as true in its description of Irish feeling as it is beautiful in a poetical point of view;—my only puzzle is, how a *Scotchman* could ever manage to write it. Some say Campbell stole it.

“You ask me,” says Oliver Goldsmith, writing to a friend, “how the plague I am so fond of Ireland. Then all at once, because you, my dear friend, and a few more, have a residence there; for myself, I never brought any thing out of Ireland, but my brogue and my blunders, so that my affection must appear as ridiculous as that of the Scotchman who refused to be cured of the itch, because it made him unco’ fond of his wife and bonny Inverary!”

The builders of Babel required the performance of a miracle to induce them to migrate and spread themselves abroad upon the earth, but it required something more terrible than this to induce the Irish to emigrate: it required a fearful famine. The bird that will not leave its nest at the approach of winter, for more genial climes, will be shaken out of it by the storms of spring; the boy who would not come down from the tree by the application of a little gentle pressure, was “pelted heartily with stones.” I do not think I overstate the number, when I say that *three millions* of Irish people have emigrated since the famine. Bear in mind, there were nearly nine millions in Ireland when the famine commenced, and that there are now—*notwithstanding* the natural increase of the population—only five millions and a half.

A Grecian philosopher defined man an “unfledged biped.” If I were asked to define an Irishman, and to give what logicians call the “essential difference” between him and an Englishman, I should style him an *emigrating* unfledged biped. For one Englishman who has spoken to me on the subject of emigration, I have had twenty Irishmen. An Irishman, though unfledged, thinks nothing of crossing the Atlantic; his motto seems to be, “A light heart and a thin pair of breeches.”

“Pat,” said an Englishman to an Irish friend, who was about to emigrate, “you should buy that box.” “What for?” said Pat. “To keep your clothes in,” said his friend. “And is it go naked?” said Pat. “I’d like that!”—Pat could imagine no clothes but those on his back.

I have seen and known young women emigrating with new *empty* boxes; they like the new boxes, "for the sake of appearance," and they expect to fill them at the other side. If Pat goes unfledged, he has "an idea" that he will be able to feather his nest on the western side of the Atlantic.

Now, if Englishmen expect to do as much in the emigration line as Irishmen, they must take a leaf out of Pat's book. There is nothing better than light weights for a long run: the baggage of the Roman soldier was called *impedementa*, from which we have our word "impediment." Take all the *money* you can get, and no luggage that you can possibly do without. You can buy things in Canada—where I should recommend the emigrant to go—as cheap as you can here. There, as Mr. Kitto will inform you, there is an emigration agency, for receiving emigrants, and drafting them on to those who require their services.

I should recommend you not to remain in or hang about large towns. Press on into the country: try and get farming work. Any man can dig, or cut down a tree; and, in farming work, women are as useful as men. If they are not able to milk a cow, they may feed a pig, and help to gather in the harvest; or bake a cake, and keep the house clean and tidy.

Farming work is so well remunerated in America, that the man who follows it for two or three years will be able to purchase ground and turn farmer, and employ labor on his own account.

"I deliberately assert," says Mr. Maguire, M.P. for Cork, in his late work, *The Irish in America*, "that it is not within the power of language to describe adequately, much less exaggerate, the evil consequences of this unhappy tendency of the Irish to congregate in the large towns of America."

"Two Irishmen," continues the same writer, "were working as helpers in a blacksmith's shop at Niagara Docks, in 1844, and having saved some money, they each purchased one hundred acres of land, at a dollar an acre; one, in particular, after bringing his family with him to their new home, and purchasing an axe, had but three quarters of a dollar in his possession. These men divided their time between working for themselves and others; at one time chopping away with the ever-busy axe, at another hiring their labor to the neighbouring settlers, who were anxious to obtain their services. In the summer months they earned as much as enabled them to live during the winter, when they were hard at work at home, clearing and fencing; and when they had cropped their own land, they went out to work again. At the time of which their story was thus told, they were each in the possession"—that is, were the owners—"of two hundred acres of cleared land, with horses, cattle, good houses, and every comfort that reasonable men could desire."

The poor English hind or agricultural labourer is greatly to be pitied, on account of the low wages he receives ; but, as it respects the nature of his location and employment, he is to be envied by the town labourer, living in a garret in a dirty, narrow alley ; or by the miner, who works under ground ; or by the fire, foundry, or factory man, who has the moisture dried out of his bones,—the lack of which he endeavours so supply by liquid fire. I sometimes look at the pale faces and reduced frames of the workmen that turn out of our large yards and workshops, and compare them with the navvies, fresh from the country, with their broad shoulders and muscular bodies, and cannot avoid the conclusion that we are paying a heavy fine in flesh, and bone, and muscle, for our superiority as workmen ! I often think of the lines of the “ *Deserted Village* ” :—

“ Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay :
Princes or lords may flourish, or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath hath made ;
But a bold peasantry, their country’s pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.”

But the question presents itself, How are you to get to Canada, and its agricultural employments ?

Well, I am happy to say that public opinion is, at last, coming fast round in favor of more extensive emigration from this country ; the signs of the times are, at length, becoming decidedly favorable. There is an interest, bustle, and excitement in this end of London, among employers, as well as workmen, on the subject of emigration, which reminds me of the hum or buzz in a hive about to cast a swarm. They say that the ringing of a bell at such a time, or even the clatter of an old tin kettle, helps on the parturition. I have, therefore, prepared this paper, and a petition to Parliament, in order to help forward the good work ; and let me request you to have the petition *numerously* signed, if you expect Parliament to put the proper pressure on the Boards of Guardians, to compel them to do all that they are legally empowered to do, in order to stimulate emigration. The Guardians may go as far as *ten pounds a head*, to enable people to emigrate ; they may vote *half the year’s income of the Union* for this purpose ; they may do more than this, they may *borrow money* to promote it.

A proper system of emigration from this country would be as certain—though not as great—an advantage to those who remain at home as to those who emigrate. Its immediate effect would be to give employment to the unemployed, to raise wages where they are too low, and to produce a better state of feeling than has lately existed between the employer and the employed

It would do far more in improving the wages of the workmen than trades' unions have been able to do ; and, in the end, it would promote the interests of the employer.

There is no use in striving against nature ; we might as well hope to keep out the tide with a pitchfork, as to expect that men—even trades' union men—will not work under trade prices if their children are starving. The voice of the union may be powerful, and its laws as unchangeable as those of the Medes and Persians, but there is something stronger and more powerful still, and that is, the voice of children calling on a father for bread. The man may wish to be loyal to his union, but he must be true to nature ; and the consequence is, when the crisis comes, the union has to go to the wall.

The only rational, true, and fair way of raising wages, is to relieve an over-stocked labor-market by emigration.

Just before the famine commenced in Ireland, for every day's work there was to do in that country, there were three men to do it, which gave to each laborer two days' work, on an average, in the week. This produced such a competition among the laborers to get work, that wages were reduced to a *minimum*, upon which it was impossible for the laborer to exist.

The labor-master is under the impression that an over-stocked labor market is for his advantage. Here he labors under a mistake. An over-stocked labor market means that the supply is greater than the demand, and that a portion of the workmen are idle ; it also means low wages, as the result of competition. Now, a workman who is only employed a portion of his time, gets into irregular and idle habits ; and if, along with this, he be indifferently fed, he will not be able to do a fair day's work. There are workmen, at this very time, on the Isle of Dogs, so deteriorated in strength, for want of nutritious food, that they are compelled to decline work, from physical inability to perform it. It must also be borne in mind, that the workman, as a rule, regulates his labor by his wages, and gives no more than a *quid pro quo*.

The tendency of these observations is to meet the objections of the employers of labor to emigration ; but we sometimes meet with objections to this movement in quarters where we least expect them. The Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland set their faces, as one man, against emigration, on account of its apparent tendency to decrease their congregations. Now, I can imagine Protestant ministers to give the subject a cold shoulder for the same reason. But what was the consequence of the rapid emigration from Ireland ? That the wages of the people so improved, that they were enabled to buy decent garments in which to appear at chapel or church, which

they had not been able to do for many a long day before. Wages had been so reduced, that they were unable to purchase a manufactured article; they could purchase nothing but the cheapest food. But after the famine, and the great emigration that followed it, the smaller number who remained in the country proved better customers to the grocers, butchers, and drapers than the larger number before the famine; for wages rose from sixpence to one-and-sixpence a day.

The removal of a fair and reasonable number of our present unemployed workmen to the backwoods of Canada would give a stimulus to many branches of our trade in England. The workman would be able to procure there, in exchange for food, which he sends here, many articles which he cannot reach at this side of the Atlantic. Here he may *make* them, but he cannot *wear* them—illustrating the old maxim, that “the shoemaker’s or cobbler’s wife is the worst shod woman in the parish.”

I recommend Canada to the emigrant—first, because it is easily reached—in about ten days—by steam; secondly, because it holds out the surest prospect of employment; thirdly, because there is there a machinery in operation for directing and aiding emigrants in procuring employment; and, fourthly, because it is loyal and true to England. “It is only of late years,” observes the Rev. Mr. Hill, in his ‘*Poor Man’s Emigration Guide to Canada*,’ “that people in England have come to know or care anything about a province, which has not inappropriately been termed the brightest of the colonial jewels in the British crown.”

“But how are we to get there?” inquires the poor, half-starved laborer in the East of London.

Petition Parliament. Let your petitions be numerously signed, and you will succeed. If Parliament sees that you are in *earnest*, they will be in earnest in aiding you. I would recommend the following form of petition to Parliament:—

TO THE HONORABLE THE COMMONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND, IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

The humble petition of the undersigned, the inhabitants of Poplar, Limehouse, and the Isle of Dogs, humbly sheweth, that, for the last two years, there has been a great dearth of employment in the above-mentioned districts, and in the East of London generally; that an increasing dearth of employment, although not to the same extent, prevails throughout the whole of England. Your petitioners are of opinion that the English labor market is becoming over-stocked; that the enterprise and operations of the country are not keeping pace with the increase of the population; and that, if efficient means be not adopted to meet this growing evil, the laboring classes will become deteriorated, and that a chronic state of pauperism will intervene, which cannot fail to paralyze the industrious operations of the country.

Your petitioners are fully convinced that the natural and proper remedy for such a state of things is a wise, paternal, and efficient system of emigration to our colonies. God gave the earth to man to be inhabited. While hundreds of thousands in our large cities are in a semi-starving state, contending with each other for labor and bread, there are millions of acres of rich lands in our colonies, untouched by spade or plough, lying waste and unproductive. A wholesome and steady system of emigration from an over-populated country like England, to an under-populated country like Canada, is almost as great an advantage to those who remain at home as to those who emigrate.

There is an impression among labor-masters that an over-stocked labor market is for the advantage of the employer. This was found to be a mistake in Ireland, where low wages and insufficient food so deteriorated the working man, that he was not able to give an equivalent for even the low wages received, to say nothing of the idle habits engendered by the want of regular employment.

Your petitioners hope that your honorable House will take the condition of our laboring classes into your most serious consideration, and provide for their speedy removal to Canada, or some other of the British colonies, either by stimulating the emigration department of our Poor-law machinery to more active operation, or by the adoption of other and more efficient measures; and your memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

I have not much faith in societies or committees generally, but I feel that the great work of emigration, which will be increasing year by year in magnitude, cannot be done by individual effort, or by the East End Emigration Society. It demands a large and powerful constitution, such as would command the sympathy of the nation, and the support of Parliament,—in the shape of annual grants. The colonies would, of course, give their aid; poor-law guardians would find it their interest to bear a portion—say, a third or a fourth—of the expense of those whom they might recommend to the society for emigration. Such a society could not fail to meet with support from the public generally. I here throw out the rough idea of a great Emigration Society for England, to be brought into shape by those who know more of the subject than I do.



