

SPEECH
OF THE
HON. JOSEPH HOWE,
PROVINCIAL SECRETARY
OF
NOVA SCOTIA,
ON
THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE TO GREAT BRITAIN
OF HER
NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES;

Delivered at SOUTHAMPTON, on the 14th of JANUARY, 1851.

LONDON:
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1851.

THE

BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES.

A PUBLIC Meeting of the inhabitants of Southampton was held at the Town Hall on Tuesday evening, January 14, 1851, convened by the Mayor, RICHARD ANDREWS, Esq., in pursuance of the following requisition, which had received the signatures of the most influential tradesmen and merchants of the town:—

“ We, the undersigned inhabitants of the borough of Southampton, are deeply impressed with the importance of promoting an enlarged system of emigration, and that emigration should be directed to British Colonies, thereby extending the trade and commerce of the mother country, and fostering a British spirit and the progress of civilisation in vast tracts of territory, possessing great natural advantages comparatively unknown to this country.

“ We are impressed also with the knowledge that this port possesses very peculiar advantages as a favourable point for national emigration, and that these advantages should be brought more prominently before our own country, and the various colonies and nations of the world.

“ We have observed with pleasure the account of the interesting interview you have had with the Hon. Mr. Howe, and trust that you may be able to induce his presence at Southampton, in order to a notice of its peculiar advantages as a port, and to enable the inhabitants of this town and county to hear from his lips, at full, the great measures of public benefit designed by his Government (Nova Scotia) in reference to these and similar subjects.

“ We, therefore, request the favour of your convening a meeting of the inhabitants of this borough, to take into consideration the important matters referred to, at an early day next week.”

Shortly after 7 o'clock the **MAYOR** took the chair, supported by the Hon. Mr. Howe, Major Carmichael-Smyth, Mr. Sheriff Payne; Aldermen Laishley, Tucker, Bienvenu, Williams, and J. Lankaster; Councillors Harman, Stebbing, Davis, Degee, Douglas, J. Clark, C. Lock, Ellyett, Brinton, and Mayoss; Mr. Senior Bailiff White; Captain Peacock, Captain May, and Captain Keele; the Rev. H. Taylor, Dr. Harding, J. S. Eldridge, Esq., J. Iselin, Esq., E. Coxwell, Esq., H. Clark, Esq., M.D., J. Wiblin, Esq., T. Falwey, Esq., J. Sharp, Jun., Esq., — Bassett, Esq., G. Pocock, Esq., Messrs. E. Mayes, W. Lankester, &c. &c. The hall was crowded throughout the evening, and the greatest interest was manifested in the proceedings until the late hour of 11 o'clock, at which hour the meeting closed.

The **TOWN CLERK** read the requisition, and also letters which had been received from B. M. Wilcox, Esq., M.P., John Rodney Croskey, Esq., (United States Consul,) and T. Powell, Esq., (Collector of Customs,) severally regretting that unavoidable causes prevented their attendance.

The **MAYOR** said that they were called together that evening to consider as important a question as had ever occupied their attention—to memorialise the Government to give all the encouragement in their power to free emigration. It had been mentioned to him by several persons that the port of Southampton stood in a most prominent position, but the people had not exerted themselves as they ought to have done. He (the Mayor) had waited, with others of the Corporation, on the Hon. Mr. Howe; and he was pleased to find that that gentleman had previously named Southampton as one of two ports in England most qualified for an emigration port. (Applause.) In consequence of their interview with Mr. Howe that meeting was got up; and now they would hear from his lips an explanation of his views regarding increased emigration, and the advantages likely to accrue to the working classes of this country. That gentleman would show them the advantages of emigration to one of our own colonies, at a comparatively small distance, and little comparative

danger to the emigrant ships employed. They must all have regretted to have seen the large number of lives lost in emigration, and that greater facilities should be provided there could be no question. Mr. Howe would show the advantages of the port of Halifax, which was one of the finest harbours in the world, and the facilities which Southampton possessed for emigrants departing to that place. If the hon. gentleman's plan should be realised, they would be able to reach Halifax in ten days. He would at once call upon the Hon. Mr. Howe to address the meeting.

Mr. HOWE.—Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,—You may imagine the various and conflicting feelings by which I am embarrassed, in rising to address this intelligent and prosperous community, and through them the twenty-eight millions of people who inhabit these British islands—the centre of modern civilization—the honored home of my fathers. Be assured that I deeply feel the responsibility which your kindness, and my public position, have tempted me to assume. The memory of those great orators, with whose highest flights of eloquence, from childhood, you have been familiar—whose voices, like distant thunder, still linger in the ears of the present generation, weighs upon me no less, than the immediate presence of those polished and skilful speakers that you are daily accustomed to hear. Would, for your sakes, that I could as easily invoke the spirit of the dead, as I do, in all sincerity and humility, crave the indulgence of the living. The magnitude of the interests which I desire to present to your notice, involving, as I believe they do, to some extent, the relief of these islands from the burthen of poverty and crime, the integrity of this empire, and the permanence of the connexion between the North American Provinces and England, oppresses the mind even more than the intellectual character of my audience. I wish those interests were less imposing—that the danger of neglecting them was less imminent, or that my ability to deal with them was proportioned to the magnitude of the theme.

When I last visited Southampton, I little thought that I should ever return to it again, and certainly never dreamed that I should

have the honor and the privilege to address, within its ancient walls, and with the evidences of its modern enterprise all around me, such an audience as is assembled here. I was then a wandering colonist, surveying, eleven years ago, Europe for a first time. Attracted to Southampton by the beauty of its scenery, and by its old associations, when I entered your spacious estuary, and saw, on the one side, the fine old ruin of Netley Abbey, and on the other the New Forest, famed in ancient story, I felt I was approaching a place abounding in interest, and honored by its associations. And when I put my foot on the spot, trodden, in days of yore, by the warriors who embarked for the glorious fields of Agincourt and Crecy, and on which Canute sat when he reproved his fawning courtiers, I felt my British blood warming in my veins, and knew that I was indeed standing on classic ground.

But, Sir, on that occasion I did not see those evidences of commercial prosperity which I was anxious to observe. In visiting to-day your splendid docks, your warehouses, your ocean steamers, your railways, and rising manufactories, which have been created by untiring energy and honorable enterprise within a few years, my pride in your historical associations was quickened and enlivened by the proofs of modern enterprise which distinguish this great seaport. (Applause.)

The object of my visit to England is to draw closer the ties between the North American Provinces and the Mother Country. To reproduce England on the other side of the Atlantic—to make the children, in institutions, feelings, and civilisation, as much like the parent as possible, has been the labour of my past life; and now I wish to encourage the parent to promote her own interests by caring for the welfare and strengthening the hands of her children,—to show to the people of England that, across the Atlantic, they possess provinces of inestimable value. (Applause.) The interest which Southampton has in a clear appreciation of their importance no man can deny. Already her advantages are obvious and patent; but they may be largely extended by North American connexions. You have the British Channel flowing by

you like a mighty river, with the great continental markets on its opposite shore, the trade of the Baltic on your left, and of the Mediterranean on your right. You have your East and West India steam lines; the Isle of Wight is your natural breakwater; a lovely country surrounds you; and the royal city of Winchester, and the imperial city of London, are at your very doors. Add to these advantages, permanent and profitable connexions with the vast territory and rapidly expanding communities of British America, and the prosperity and importance of Southampton will be greatly enhanced. (Hear, hear.)

I found existing in this country, when I was here before, and I still observe it on every hand, I will not say a criminal, but certainly a very lamentable ignorance of the state of the British Provinces on the continent of America. An erroneous opinion prevails, that at the American Revolution all that was valuable on that continent was severed from British dominion; that but a few insignificant and almost worthless provinces remain. This is a great, and, if not corrected in time, may ultimately prove a fatal mistake. Glance at the map above you, Sir, and you will perceive that one-half of the whole American continent still owns allegiance to Great Britain—is still subject to the sceptre of Queen Victoria. (Hear, hear.) That vast extent of country, is, however, but little known in England. Intelligent men ask me, every day, where it is?—of what it consists?—what are its boundaries? Gentlemen perfectly familiar with Canada, know comparatively nothing of the maritime provinces, which here (though as distinct as Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland are from Russia) are yet confounded with Canada. Merchants who trade with Newfoundland know as little of Canada; Nova Scotia is a sort of *terra incognita*, of which one rarely hears, and many Canadians know nothing of the boundless and beautiful tract of country which lies between their province and the Pacific.

Although the United States have extended their boundaries by the conquest of the Mexican Provinces, Great Britain still owns one-half the continent of North America. This territory, with

its adjacent islands, is 4,000,000 of square miles in extent. All Europe, including the British Islands, measures but 3,708,000 ; so that, throwing away 292,000 square miles for rivers and lakes of larger extent than are found in this hemisphere, you have in North America, for the inexhaustible sustenance of British subjects, a country as large as Europe. (Hear, hear.) This country resembles Europe in all its principal features ; it is full of the same natural advantages, and as capable of improvement as Europe was in her early days. Taking the round number of square miles, and reducing them to acres, and we have above 90 acres for every man, woman, and child in the British Islands. Now, suppose that they throw off two millions of their population, and I shall shew you presently that there are that number to spare, we shall have a square mile of land for every inhabitant ; or 4,480 acres for every head of a family that British America would then contain. Is not this a country to which, in the present condition of England, the attention of her statesmen and of her people should be turned ? But it is often said the climate of North America is rigorous and severe. Do me the favour to glance at the Eastern Hemisphere, including Europe, Asia, and Africa, and separating the northern countries from the south, the vigorous parallels from the warm and enervating, tell me in which reside at this moment, the domestic virtues, the pith of mankind, the seats of commerce, the centres of intelligence, the arts of peace, the discipline of war, the political power and dominion ? Assuredly in the northern half. And yet it was not always so. The southern and eastern portions, blessed with fertility, and containing the cradle of our race, filled up first, and ruled for a time the territories at the north. But as civilisation and population advanced northwards, the bracing climate did its work, as it will ever do ; and in physical endurance, and intellectual energy, the north asserted the superiority, which, to this hour, it maintains.

Glance again at the map, and you will perceive that England still owns half the continent of North America ; and taking the

example of Europe to guide us, I believe, the best half. Not the best for slavery, for, thank God, we have not got a Slave nor a Fugitive Slave Law in our northern provinces. (Loud cheers.) Not the best for raising cotton or tobacco ; but the best for raising men and women ; the most congenial to the constitution of the northern European ; the most provocative of steady industry ; and all things else being equal, the most impregnable and secure.

The climate of North America, though colder than that of England, is dryer when it is cold. I rarely wear an overcoat, except when it rains : an old Chief-Justice died recently in Nova Scotia at 103 years of age, who never wore one in his life. Sick regiments, invalided to our garrison, recover their health and vigour immediately ; and yellow fever patients coming home from the West Indies walk about in a few days. Look at the countenances and robust appearance of the inhabitants, and you will see the vigour and energy that the climate of North America imparts.

I have said that, all things being equal, the two divisions of the continent would be similarly improved ; but, Sir, they are not, and never have been, equal. The first British emigration all went to the southern half. Whither went the "Mayflower," that sailed with the Pilgrims from this port ? To the heart of the New England states. Whither went Penn's and Baltimore's emigration ? To Pennsylvania and Maryland. The northern portion, for 150 years, being occupied by French hunters, traders, and Indians. The British did not begin to settle in Nova Scotia till 1749, nor in Canada till 1763. Prior to the former period Massachusetts numbered 160,000 inhabitants ; Connecticut, 100,000 ; Philadelphia had her 18,000 inhabitants before an Englishman had built a house in Halifax ; and Maine had her 2,485 enrolled militiamen, long before a Briton had settled in the province of New Brunswick. All the other states were proportionably advanced before Englishmen turned their attention to the northern provinces at all. The permanent occupation of Halifax, and the loyalist emigration from the older states, gave them the first impetus. But, you will perceive, that, in the race

of improvement, the old thirteen states had a long start ; they had three millions of Britons and their descendants, a flourishing commerce, and much wealth, to begin with, at the Revolution. But a few hundreds occupied the provinces to which I wish to call your attention at the commencement of the war, but a few thousands at its close.

Now, Mr. Chairman, you will perceive, that had both these portions of the American continent enjoyed the same advantages down to the present hour, the southern half must have improved, and increased its numbers, much faster than the northern. But the advantages were not equal. The excitement and the necessities of the war of independence inspired the people at the south with enterprise and self-confidence, and non-intercourse with Great Britain stimulated domestic manufactures. Besides, they had free trade with each other, and, so far as they chose to have, or could obtain it by their own diplomacy, with all the world. The northern provinces had separate governments—half-paternal despotisms, which repressed instead of stimulating enterprise. They had often hostile tariffs, and, down to the advent of Mr. Huskisson, and even to the period when the Navigation Laws were repealed, were cramped in their commercial operations by the restrictive policy of England.

In other respects the south had the advantage. From the moment that their independence was recognised the confederated states enjoyed the absolute control over their internal affairs. Fancy what this did for them, for more than half a century that the northern provinces were governed by politicians voted in and out of office by the fluctuations of opinion in England, or by officers sent out, and by the permanent irresponsible cliques that these almost invariably gathered round them. Down to the year 1839, when Lord John Russell's celebrated despatch was promulgated in the colonies,—and the struggle was scarcely over till 1848, when that despatch was acted on and enforced by the present Government,—the colonies were carrying on perpetual contests with Governors and Secretaries of State, to win that which Englishmen have

enjoyed since the Revolution of 1688—the privilege of managing their own affairs. (Hear.) To that contest I devoted twenty years of my life, and I thank God it is now over. England has given us that self-government which she has herself enjoyed for a century and a half, and I trust we shall make a good use of it. (Hear, hear.)

But I have not enumerated all the sources of disparity. The National Government of the United States early saw the value and importance of emigration. It bought up Indian lands, enlarged acknowledged boundaries by pertinacious and successful diplomacy, surveyed its territory, and prepared for colonization. The States, or public companies or speculators within them, borrowed millions from England (a good many of which they have forgotten to pay); (laughter and cheers;) opened roads; laid off and advertised lots in every part of Europe, and invited emigration. Congress framed constitutions suited to the new settlements, invested them with modified self-government from the moment that the most simple materials for organization were accumulated; and formed them into new states, with representation in the national councils, whenever they numbered 40,000 inhabitants. Ohio, for instance, which is one of the colonies thus planted, did not exist in 1783. It now contains a million and a half of people, and has its 19 members in Congress. British America contains two millions, and has not a single representative in your National Council.

But pass that over. While all this was going on what did England do to people and to promote the prosperity of her northern provinces? Almost nothing. She was too much occupied with foreign wars and diplomacy—often descending from her high estate to subsidize foreign princes, whose petty dominions, if flung into a Canadian lake, would scarcely raise the tide. (Laughter and cheers.) What did we do in the northern provinces to fill up this territory? We did the best we could. We married as early, and increased the population as fast, as we could. But, jesting apart, what could we do? Down to 1815 we were engrossed by

the wars of England, our commerce being cramped by the insecurity of our coasts and harbours. Down to 1848 we were engaged in wars with successive Governors and Secretaries of State, for the right to manage our internal affairs. These are now over, and we, on our side of the water, have got command, to some extent at least, of our own resources and of our time. We have now the means and the leisure to devote to the great questions of colonization, emigration, and internal improvement,—to examine our external relations with the rest of the empire and with the world at large,—to consult with you on the imperfect state of those relations, and upon the best appropriation that can be made of your surplus labour and of our surplus land, for our mutual advantage, that the poor may be fed, the waste places filled up, and this great empire strengthened and preserved.

Having shown you why the contrast is so striking between the United States and the North American Provinces, let me now show you what the latter have accomplished, even under all the disadvantages which they have had to encounter.

The five that occupy that portion of territory which has been politically organised, are :—Canada, which lies the farthest back, and is the most extensive and populous of the whole ; New Brunswick, which joins to Canada ; Nova Scotia, next to that ; Prince Edward's Island, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence ; and the Island of Newfoundland. With all their disadvantages, let me now show the audience what these colonies have done and what they are worth. The five provinces number about two millions of inhabitants. Their average imports and exports, from 1842 to 1846, have been as follows :—

	Imports.	Exports.
Canada	£2,174,332	£1,819,695
Nova Scotia	984,225	767,596
New Brunswick	794,785	651,668
Newfoundland	783,870	885,251
Prince Edward's Island	110,783	63,867
Shewing a Total of	<u>£4,847,995</u>	<u>£4,188,077</u>

Now, a total amount of imports of near five millions, and over four millions of exports, does not show a bad industrial condition in such a short time, and under such disadvantages. (Hear, hear).

I have noticed the common mistake which people make in Europe who confound the Maritime Provinces and Canada together, as though there was no distinction. Canada is a noble colony, full of resources, but its harbours are closed with frost in winter, while those of Nova Scotia and of most of the maritime provinces are open all the year round. For general commerce you will perceive, then, that our advantages are very superior—that our people are destined much more extensively than their brethren in the rear, to “go down to the sea in ships,” to be the carriers and factors of those who occupy the extensive regions further west. These maritime colonies, in point of territory, include 86,000 square miles, an area half as large again as the kingdoms of England and Scotland, and nearly as large as Holland, Greece, Belgium, Portugal, and Switzerland, all put together. They are rich in mines and surrounded by the best fisheries in the world. Taking all the provinces, and summing up the number of registered vessels they now possess, not including vessels merely built for the English market, I find that Canada owned, in 1846, 604; New Brunswick, 730; Newfoundland, 937; and Prince Edward’s Island, 265; being a total of 2,536 vessels, measuring 252,892 tons. Nova Scotia, my own province, the peculiar character and resources of which are but little understood in England, possessed in 1846, 2,583 vessels; or, 47 more than all the other four provinces put together, and measuring 141,093 tons. Nova Scotia, in many respects, greatly resembles England. It is nearly an island, being joined to the province of New Brunswick by a narrow isthmus. Of coal, it has endless fields; it has iron in rich abundance; inexhaustible fisheries surround its shores; and its noble harbours are open all the year round. Its population is made up of English, Irish, and Scotchmen; or, rather, of a native race, combining the blood and the

characteristics of the three kingdoms, with a few Germans and French, who make agreeable varieties.

With this brief description, I trust, Sir, that you will perceive that we have wrestled manfully with the disadvantages I have described ; are not unworthy of our lineage, nor have been heedless of the resources of the countries we occupy. Five thousand vessels floating on the ocean, under your flag, is our contribution in a single century to the mercantile marine of the empire. This does not include boats engaged in the shore fisheries. Of this fleet, little Nova Scotia owns one-half, or more vessels in number than all Ireland, though the tonnage is not quite so great. To enable you more nearly to appreciate the value and resources of these northern provinces, let me furnish a very striking contrast : I take the eastern colonies, or Mauritius and Ceylon ; the African colonies, including the Cape ; the Australian colonies, including New Zealand ; and the West India colonies, including the Bahamas and Guiana ; and putting all their tonnage together, they have but 2,128 vessels, measuring 98,183 tons. You see, therefore, that the five North American provinces own more than double the number of vessels which belong to all the other colonies of England, Nova Scotia alone having nearly twice the amount of their aggregate tonnage.

But some may ask, What interest have the people of England in these statistics ? Why should they trouble themselves about the extent or the resources of the countries you describe ? Let me now show you, Mr. Chairman, how deep and all-pervading an interest the people of these islands have in this enquiry. The late Charles Buller (whose loss North America deeply mourns, for he was her steady and enlightened advocate—whose aid I regret I have not now, for he was my personal friend) declared, in the House of Commons, a short time before he died, that in Ireland, on an average, 2,000,000 people were unemployed for 30 weeks in the year. To what extent fever and famine have diminished that number since, I do not know ; but I take the fact as it then stood, and fear that too near an approximation to

that statement might be hazarded, even now. In Ireland, in the year 1848, (to say nothing of the £10,000,000 voted by Parliament, of the provisions sent in from foreign countries, or of the voluntary aid extended to that unhappy country,) there was raised within her own boundaries, no less a sum than £1,216,679, and expended in poor-rates; or an average of 1s. 10*d.* on £13,000,000. Nearly a million and a half of persons were relieved, to the extent of 16s. 8*d.* per head. In Scotland, £544,000 was raised and expended; the number of persons relieved 227,647; and the amount paid averaged £2. 7s. 9*d.* each—enough to have shipped every poor Scotchman out, in a well-appointed steamer, to Nova Scotia; there to become a blessing to the colony, a customer, not a burthen, to the mother country. In England—which, if this plague-spot were removed, would be as near perfection as can be attained by any civilized community—the enormous amount of £6,110,765 was raised and expended in 1848, being 1s. 6*d.* on £67,000,000. 1,876,541 persons were relieved, or about one in every eleven of the whole population in this garden of the world! The average cost of each person relieved, was £3. 5s. 10*d.*—more than enough to have shipped every man to our own northern colonies, and made proprietors and freeholders of them for life.

I turn to the workhouses, and find that in 1849 they contained:—

In England.—Boys . . .	30,158.	Fit for service . . .	4,570
Girls . . .	26,165.	Ditto . . .	3,690
	<u>56,323</u>		<u>8,264</u>

In Ireland.—Boys . . .	62,514
Girls . . .	66,285
	<u>128,799</u>

Making a total of 185,122, without including Scotland, from which I have no return.

Then, again, look at the number of committals for offences in the three kingdoms in the year 1848, viz. :—

In England	30,000
Ireland	38,552
Scotland	4,900
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Making a total number of . . .	<u>73,771</u>

Of this number 6,298 were transported, and 37,373 were imprisoned. I refer to these painful facts, not because I believe you are worse than the people on our side of the Atlantic, but because I believe a vast number of poor wretched creatures break the laws in these islands because they have not the wherewithal to live (hear); they are absolutely driven by poverty to the commission of crime. Many of these are imprisoned, and expatriated from their country, who, in my conscience, I believe to be as innocent, in the sight of God, as any man in this assembly. (Hear, hear.) You maintained in Ireland, in 1849, a constabulary force of 12,829, and 340 horses, at a cost of £562,506; and in England and Wales, including the London police, nearly an equal number at a nearly equal cost. In this service you expended a gross total of £1,140,000; thus maintaining as many constables in these two small islands as doubled the whole standing army of the United States of America. (Hear, hear.)

And is this necessary because the people of these islands are worse than their brethren of the New World? By no means: but Government is compelled to maintain this force in consequence of the immense pressure upon the means of subsistence in this country, and which pressure would be relieved, till you might reduce your constabulary one-half, by promoting sound and wholesome emigration. Then, again, I might refer to the cost of prisons. I find that the prison at York cost £1,200 per head for each prisoner they have to maintain in it—enough, as the Inspector reports, “to build for each a separate mansion, coach-house, and stable.” If you multiply by twelve (the number

of jurors summoned on a jury) the number of criminals tried, you will see the enormous amount of time wasted in the punishment of crime. Then, there is the amount of property stolen by criminals—which no man can guage; it still continues to increase with the progress of population and the advancement of crime. There is another consideration—the cost of life and property destroyed by agrarian outrages, superinduced by the artificial and pressing system under which you suffer in this country. And what is the remedy for all this? I turn at once to the four millions of square miles of territory under the Queen's sceptre on the continent of North America, with its noble rivers, fertile soil, exhaustless fisheries, and valuable mines; and I ask, will you allow three-fourths of this vast territory to continue a howling wilderness? Many persons have an idea that large emigration may empty England. Empty England? The idea is preposterous. No Englishman, Irishman, or Scotchman will live out of these islands that can live in them. (Hear, hear.) No man would voluntarily choose to leave this country, which is a garden from shore to shore, and exchange it for a comparative wilderness. Who would leave the land of their fathers, with all its historical associations, unless driven out by poverty, or stimulated by high enterprise?

But, we are sometimes told, there is only one enlightened mode of colonization, and that is being very extensively tried in our southern and eastern colonies. Of the Wakefield theory of colonization, I would speak with all respect; of the combined efforts of public spirited individuals, seeking to give it a fair trial, I would be the last to disapprove. I do not wish to check the progress, in valuable colonies, of associated enterprize; but having for more than a month closely examined all that they have done, and are capable of doing, I turn from them to the North American field, satisfied that they must continue to furnish but homœopathic remedies for the internal maladies of England.

In 22 years, from 1825 to 1846 inclusive, only 124,272 persons

went from these United Kingdoms to the Australian colonies and New Zealand. In the same period 710,410 went to the United States, to strengthen a foreign and rival power; to entrench themselves behind a hostile tariff, ranging from 15 to 100 per cent. over British manufactures; to become consumers of American manufactures instead, and of foreign productions, sea borne in American bottoms: they, and the countless generation that has already sprung from their loins, unconscious of regard for British interests, and of allegiance to the Crown of England.

In 22 years, 124,272 settlers have gone to Australia and New Zealand! About half the number on the Poor-rate of Scotland in 1848. Not a tenth part of the paupers relieved in Ireland; or one in fourteen of those who were supported by England's heavily taxed industry, in that single year. Not more, I fear, than died of famine in a single county of Ireland, from 1846 to 1850; and less, by 60,000, than the number of the young people who were in the workhouses of England and Ireland in 1849. Valuable then as these eastern colonies may be, and respectable as may have been the efforts to improve them, it is obvious that as aids to the removal of pressure upon the resources of the United Kingdom, those who calculate largely upon them are sure to be deceived. The reasons are obvious. Australia and New Zealand are 14,000 miles from the shores of England; the British provinces of North America are but 2,500. Every poor man who embarks for Australia must be maintained by somebody for 120 or 150 days, while he is rolling about in idleness on the sea. The ordinary passage to North America, in sailing vessels, is about 40 days. With steam we may hope soon to reach Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 8 or 10 days, and Canada in 12. The expense of a passage to the east is £20, to the west it is £3. 10s.; and with emigrant steam-vessels may be still further reduced. Then, mark the disproportionate prices of land. In Australia or New Zealand 100 acres of land cost £100 sterling; in the Canterbury Settlement, £300. In Western Canada 100 acres of the best land in the empire can be bought for £40; in Lower Canada for

£20. In New Brunswick, where there are still 11,000,000 of ungranted acres in possession of the Government, for £12. 10s. In Nova Scotia, where land is now, in many districts, as valuable as in any of the colonies, and from the increase of commerce, soon will be in all, we give 100 acres of Crown land to an emigrant for £10.

But, we are told, that in the eastern colonies these high prices are not paid for land alone, but for civilization—for roads, schools, religious ordinances, and education, without which land is of no value. I know not whether we are very highly civilized in North America, but I will just explain the position of Nova Scotia, and let the audience judge for themselves. It is divided into seventeen counties, and every county has its sheriff, magistrates, gaol, court-house, and two terms of the Supreme Court, in which the common and statute law of England is administered. The province is intersected with roads, and bridges span all the larger, and most of the smaller streams. Every county is divided into townships, and each township has its shire town; and in those towns there are places of worship for the Episcopalian, the Methodist, the Baptist, the Presbyterian, the Catholic, the Independent, and for the various modifications of religious opinion which divide the inhabitants of these islands. Every county has from 50 to 100 public schools. (Hear, and cheers.) There is scarcely a house in Nova Scotia without a Bible in it, and hardly a native of the province who would not be ashamed to be unable to read it. (Hear, hear.) This is the “barbarous” state of the North American provinces, for Nova Scotia is but the type of them all. If what I have described be civilization, we shall be extremely glad to give all these blessings, this civilization, such as it is, to every Englishman, Irishman, or Scotchman, who chooses to come into the province, and 100 acres of land besides, for £10.

But England’s political, as well as her moral and industrial interests, demand that her North American possessions should be strengthened and improved. We hear a good deal occasionally

about the balance of power in Europe ; and, one would suppose, by the excitement created by some paltry continental intrigue, or petty principality in Germany or the Mediterranean, that the very existence of this great nation was often involved. The people of British America, in their simplicity, are sometimes apt to think that if half the trouble was taken about the territories which belong to us that is wasted on those which do not, our British brethren would be nearly as well employed. (Hear, hear.) I am no alarmist, but there appear to be many in England, and some of them holding high military and social positions, who regard England as defenceless, at this moment, from the assaults of any first-rate European power. Now, suppose that France or Russia were to combine her military and naval forces with those of the United States to attack England, hopeful as I am of the destiny, and confident in the resources of these islands, I doubt not but they would, in the end, come gloriously through the struggle. But who can deny that the contest would be perilous for a time, and, under the most favourable circumstances, very expensive ? One American war added £120,000,000 to your debt : a few millions, profitably employed, but not wasted, in the northern provinces, will so strengthen them as to make another war a very remote contingency, and comparatively little burthensome or hazardous, if it ever comes. But, suppose the northern provinces neglected and ultimately lost ; imagine the territories of the Republic extended to Hudson's Bay, and that the spirit generated by two wars, and which a word, a single act, so readily revives, pervaded the continent. Strip England of every port on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans—leave her without a ton of coal for her steamers, or a spar to repair a ship. Fancy the 5,000 vessels that we now own added to the enemy's fleet, and the 400,000 men that we could arm to-morrow added to her forces—the enemy's outposts and arsenals would then be advanced 500 miles nearer to England, and the West Indian colonies overpowered and lost, as a matter of course. Would not the balance of power in Europe be thus fearfully disturbed, because England had failed to maintain the

balance of power in America? The picture, Mr. Chairman, is too painful to be dwelt on, even for a moment; and I gladly turn to the measures which I believe, by strengthening, and inspiring the northern provinces with grateful confidence in the policy and maternal forethought of the United Kingdoms, will render the empire impregnable and secure.

The measures which I propose are extremely simple, and in the end will be found almost self-sustaining, relieving rather than adding to the burthens of the State. They include—

Ocean steamers for the poor as well as the rich.

The preparation of wild lands for settlement by the Colonial Governments.

The promotion of Public Works, of acknowledged national utility, by the interposition of Imperial credit, that the labour market may be extended, and the poor of Great Britain employed, as an aid to colonization.

The bounties which you now pay to encourage your North American and West India mail steamers amount to £385,000. For this sum you maintain, on the ocean, 24 noble vessels, which in peace are a protection to commerce in the seas they traverse, and could in a moment be converted into formidable vessels of war. The postage on the letters they carry pays a large portion, if not the whole expense. To build and equip the same number of steam-ships for the navy would require an expenditure of £2,400,000 in the first instance, and the annual cost would not be less than the bounty now paid. It is clear that, by these contracts, the nation is stronger by the twenty-four ships, and yet saves the £2,400,000 it would cost to build them, even should no postage be received. Apply the same principle to the conveyance of emigrants that you do to the conveyance of letters. The same bounty which you now pay to one of these lines would at once add eight or ten more noble ships to the naval force of England. There might be some loss at first, but ultimately they would be self-sustaining, and the millions you now maintain in unions and workhouses would not only be enabled to maintain themselves,

but would ultimately, by their increased traffic and intercourse, maintain for you an important addition to the naval force of the empire.

[Mr. Howe illustrated the necessity for the employment of Emigration Steamers, by shewing the deplorable results of emigration as it had been conducted to the North American provinces in sailing-vessels, particularly in years of famine or industrial derangement at home. He shewed, from the Official Returns, that in 1847, 17,445 British subjects died on the passage to Canada and New Brunswick alone—in quarantine, or in the hospitals; that, from the infection spread through thirty colonial towns and cities, there was too much reason to believe that the number must have swelled to 25,000. By quotations from American works he inferred that an equal number perished on their way to, or in the United States, in the same year; making an aggregate of 50,000.]

I am quite aware, said he, that Government were not to blame for this mortality; that to have prevented emigration would have made the matter worse. I am quite aware that improved regulations have since been proposed and established, and that a famine year affords no fair criterion of the average mortality in ordinary seasons. But when we reflect that but 800 men were sunk in the *Royal George*; that but 1,993 were slain at the battle of Waterloo; that at Salamanca but one in 90 of those engaged was killed, and but one in 104 at Maida, we are impressed with the solemnity of the obligation to guard against such results in all time to come. The loss, by this single year's emigration, was equal to the aggregate population of three Irish cities, or of three of the smaller agricultural counties of Scotland. The Ocean Omnibus for the poor is the true remedy. In ordinary seasons it will make emigration a cheerful change from one part of the Queen's dominions to another; in periods of distress, of derangement and plethora in the labour market, it will transport Her Majesty's subjects in health and security from where they are not wanted to where they are.

[Mr. Howe also illustrated the evils arising from fraud and misdirection, and from collisions and shipwrecks at sea, and the heavy expenses consequently thrown upon the Provincial Governments. One cargo of emigrants, wrecked upon the coast of Nova Scotia in 1848, cost its Government, to relieve the sick, bury the dead, and to tranship the survivors, £939, or £5. 10s. per head. Another cargo of 127 Highlanders, shipped by a proprietor in South Uist, to clear his estate, cost him to export and misdirect, £3. 10s. per head. It cost the Government £4. 10s. to bury the dead, to cure the poor people who survived of small-pox, and tranship them to Prince Edward's Island and Cape Breton. He also shewed the hostile colonial legislation which the inevitable sickness and casualties attendant upon long voyages in sailing vessels, generated; and explained how these laws would be swept away, and how cheerfully the Colonial Governments would lay off their lands, and prepare for emigration, if the working classes could be sent out with certainty, in health, and landed at convenient ports; where their friends, and proprietors having land to dispose of, would be ready to receive them. Steamers could run along the southern coasts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and land emigrants wherever they were wanted. They could run through the Gut of Canso, and supply the northern counties, including Prince Edward's Island. They would go up the St. Lawrence, and drop them from Gaspé to Quebec.]

But, Mr. Chairman, I am anxious to see these ocean steamers for the working classes, on another account. The omnibus in the Strand,—the parliamentary train, carries passengers both ways. So will it be with the poor man's steamer. Now, when an emigrant leaves home, he leaves it for ever. The Scotchman breathes his lament of "Lochaber no more." Green Erin goes down, as the ship recedes, like an emerald sunk in the sea; for, except in their dreams, the children she throws off from her bosom rarely return to it again. Of thousands who annually leave merrie England, how few ever revisit their kindred, or see home again until death

has robbed it of every charm. Why is this? The length and uncertainty of the voyage, the misery endured, the peril encountered, the relations lost, the fraud, the misdirection, make the emigrant family, to the close of life, dread the sea. Then the cost, in a mail steamer, to and fro, would swallow the price of a farm. What are the political effects? That the British Islands throw off, not only the bodies, but the souls—the clustering affections and ever-springing recollections of home, with the hope to revisit it, which, if not realized, soothes to the end of life, and would, if the prospects were rational, be then bequeathed to the next generation. Whenever gratified, the effects would be conservation of British feelings, and a thousand links of love would be thus woven to bind the two countries together. Let us, then, have the Ocean Omnibus, not only to carry the working classes of Great Britain and Ireland to the virgin soil which invites them, but to bring them back—the fortunate, to relieve their kindred, and those of moderate means to revisit their home or the home of their fathers, to tread the scenes which history hallows, and compare, without a blush, the modern triumphs and civilization of England, even with those of the proud Republic beyond the frontier. Such a squadron would be worth to North America and to England a dozen ships of war, and could be maintained ultimately for a fifth part of the expense. The Britons who crossed and re-crossed in them would not only maintain them with little or no cost to the nation in times of peace, but with light crews, help to defend them in case of war.

The preparation of their lands for settlement, the repeal of all taxation upon emigrants, and the creation of facilities for settlement and distribution, would be spontaneous results of Colonial legislation, costing the mother country nothing. Already works of great magnitude and importance have been designed, and are ripening to completion in North America. Some of these have already received the sanction and approval of the British Government, as they assuredly involve important national as well as colonial interests. We do not ask the

British people to tax themselves for these, further than we can shew them that they will save two pounds for every one they risk. But we do ask them to interpose the national credit to enable us to construct them on the best terms,—to create a labour-market at their very doors,—to furnish, within the Queen's dominions, a profitable field for the investment of that surplus capital of £50,000,000 a year which lies in your coffers, and which when lent to foreign countries is rarely paid, and cannot be collected without imminent risks of war. We ask you to employ your money and plant your people, under the standard of England, that they may not drift off and entrench themselves behind hostile tariffs. We ask you to seize the strong points of your own territory, and build up British cities by securing to them the full advantages of trans-Atlantic intercourse. We ask you to provide employment for millions who are a burthen, but who can maintain themselves by industry. We ask you to divide the soil of the empire among those who have neither roof-tree to shelter them, nor a hearthstone that they can call their own.

With all their wealth the freehold proprietors of these islands are, I believe, estimated at 80,000. But 1 in every 350 of those who tell us they rule the seas own a single acre of land. An Englishman boasts that his house is his castle; and so, perhaps, it is, but it rarely stands upon his own soil. How large a proportion of the inmates of these castles may have them demolished, or their household deities scattered, when the leases fall in? In Scotland but 636,000 of the inhabitants out of 2,600,000, live upon the land. All the rest, driven in by the high price of it, overcrowd the labour-markets of seaports and manufacturing towns. In Ireland there were, until recently, perhaps are now, 42,262 farms of only one acre in extent; 473,755 averaging from one to 30. Between 1841 and 1848, 800,000 tenants in that unhappy but most lovely country, were driven out from these small holdings, (“evicted” as the term goes,) their hovels, in many cases, burnt over their heads, and their furniture “canted” into the street.

With this condition of real estate, do you wonder that Chartism, Socialism, O'Connor land schemes, are rife upon your soil? Is it not hard for the great body of this people, after ages spent in foreign wars for the conquest of distant possessions,—in voyages of discovery, and every kind of commercial enterprise, to reflect that, with all their battles by land and sea,—their £800,000,000 of debt,—their assessed taxes, income tax, and heavy import duties,—their prisons full of convicts,—their poor-rate of seven millions,—so few of all those who have done and who endure these things, should yet have one inch of the whole earth's surface that they can call their own. Good harvests and a brisk trade may soothe the disinherited, the standing army and the 21,000 constables may keep them down, even in periods of industrial derangement; but, even if they could for ever, the question naturally arises, have all your battles been fought for this—to maintain, in England a state of siege; to have the sword for ever hung above her bosom, suspended by a single hair?

God forbid, Mr. Chairman. But what is the remedy? Agrarian outrage and violation of the rights of property? No, Sir. I would not divide the estates of the rich among the poor, but I would open up to the poor the virgin soil of the empire, that they may no longer eat into the fortunes while they envy the prosperity of the rich. Give the poor Scotchman who has no land a piece of North America, purchased by the blood which stained the tartain on the plains of Abraham. Let the Englishman or Irishman, whose kindred dashed through the surf at Louisburg or clubbed their muskets at Bloody Creek, have a bit of the land their fathers fought for. Let them at least have the option of ownership and occupation, and a bridge to carry them over. The results of such a policy would as assuredly be conservative of the rights of property as it would permanently relieve the people.

For your sakes, as well as for their own, Mr. Chairman, the people of British America are anxious to see you adopt an elevated and enlarged scheme of colonial policy, by which relief

will be given to your resources, and strength to their own. The hopes and prospects of the future will then atone for the omissions and errors of the past. We shall feel that England is indeed our home, and you will feel that you have homes on both sides of the Atlantic. Men will go from these islands to British America, as they now go from Hampshire to Wiltshire ; and thousands will return every year to tread the scenes which history hallows, or, if need be, to defend the temples where our common ancestry repose. Though we cannot afford to play at soldiers every day, as they do upon the continent, for we prefer to handle the axe, and plough the land and sea, yet we have a Landwehr who own their own muskets,—who, at their own expense, could put a month's provisions upon their backs,—and be here, by steam, in ten days, if their Sovereign required their services. But they would be undisciplined and awkward. Perhaps so ; yet full of energy and resources, they would learn as much in a week as an European serf does in a year ; and when the shock of battle came, you might

“ Ask yon despots whether
 Their plumed bands
 Could bring such hands
 And hearts as ours together ?”

I am happy to be enabled to add, Sir, that the representations which it has been my duty to make to Her Majesty's Government, in reference to these subjects, have been received in the fairest possible spirit. (Hear, hear.) I believe that the present Cabinet is sincerely desirous, if the practicability of the plans can be demonstrated, to relieve the burthens of this country and strengthen the North American provinces. But I need scarcely tell you that no Administration in these islands can do any thing but what the people approve. The responsibility, in this, as in all other important measures, rests with the people. Let them assume the desire of Government, and act upon it. Let them stimulate the Executive, if that is required.

Before the American Revolution an old philosopher came over to this country, on a mission in which he failed ; the Government of that day treated him coldly, but he forgot to appeal to the people. I believe that if the people of this country had understood the question then as they do now, much bloodshed and expenditure would have been saved. I anticipate no coldness from the Government, and certainly have received nothing but courtesy and kindness from those members of it with whom I have been brought into communication. In the British people I have an abiding faith. I should regret if it were otherwise, for I have an hereditary interest in these questions. During the old times of persecution, four brothers, bearing my name, left the southern counties of England, and settled in four of the old New England states. Their descendants number thousands, and are scattered from Maine to California. My father was the only descendant of that stock who, at the Revolution, adhered to the side of England. His bones rest in the Halifax churchyard. I am his only surviving son ; and, whatever the future may have in store, I want, when I stand beside his grave, to feel that I have done my best to preserve the connection he valued, that the British flag may wave above the soil in which he sleeps.

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