



**INTRODUCTION**

**TO**

**A COURSE OF LECTURES**

**ON**

**COLONIZATION AND COLONIES.**

**BEGUN IN MARCH, 1839.**

**BY**

**HERMAN MERIVALE, A.M.**

**LATE FELLOW OF BALIOL COLLEGE, AND PROFESSOR OF**  
**POLITICAL ECONOMY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF**  
**OXFORD.**

---

**LONDON:**

**PRINTED FOR**  
**LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,**  
**PATERNOSTER-ROW.**

**1839.**

LONDON :  
Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,  
New-Street-Square.

---

ACCORDING to the rules of the foundation of the Chair of Political Economy at Oxford, the Professor is required to publish some portion of his Lectures every year. This is the Author's only apology for presenting to the public a mere Prefatory Address, which would have appeared more in its place along with the course to which it was intended to serve as an introduction.

---



AN

## INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

&c.

---

IT is my wish, on the present occasion, to enter on a theme of a more extensive and diversified character than any to which I have hitherto endeavoured to direct your consideration. To do justice to it — even such justice as I am able to render — will require some sacrifice of time and of labour, and I shall make, I fear, a somewhat protracted demand on the attention of those whom I may find willing to hear me. To fill up the outlines of such a plan as I have endeavoured to lay down for myself — and a less extensive one would scarcely satisfy my views of what is due to a subject of this magnitude — will render it necessary, in all probability, that I should recur to it during several visits to this place, before I can bring it to completion. But the topic appears to me to have this great advantage : that it is easily divisible into distinct por-

tions, each of which is rich in matter of no small importance to the political economist ; and I shall endeavour so to divide it as to make it easy for those who may not have power or inclination to follow me throughout, to comprise at least one of these portions within their attendance. There is, indeed, scarcely any principle of the science of Political Economy to which we shall not have occasion in turn to refer ; and which we shall not find occasion to illustrate by some important examples. It is in the foundation and government of colonies that men have in all ages applied those theories which, in older societies, could not easily find fair play ; it is by the economical history of colonies that the real character of such theories may often most readily be tested.

There was a period in the modern history of the world, extending far into the second century from the discovery of America, when the theory of colonization was perhaps of all strictly practical speculations the most interesting to the European public. Adventurers embarked in the career of foreign settlement at first in the ardent spirit of romance, and afterwards with all the resolution of avarice. Nations and sovereigns seconded their endeavours with the zeal of intense rivalry, and under the influence of the most sanguine dreams of extending their wealth

and power. During that long period, scarcely a season elapsed which did not carry some portion of the most enterprising spirits of Western Europe to try their fortunes in new colonization. It was long before the desire to form fresh settlements — to appropriate every unclaimed nook or corner of the world — was in any degree appeased, and that emigrants became at all contented to settle down in established communities and under existing laws. The squadrons of Spain, Portugal, England, France, and Holland, jostled each other at sea, and the advanced posts of their emigrants encountered in every distant land. Every possible scheme of government and commerce was in course of trial. Some states granted their conquered soil to exclusive companies; some to feudal proprietors; some farmed it out to capitalists; some peopled it with convicts; some cultivated it with slaves; some exterminated native races; some subjected them to the burden and the lash. The plantation trade was confined to patentees, to companies, to particular ports, to licensed fleets; and scarcely an experiment in colonization can be suggested by the most ingenious speculator of the present day, for which a precedent may not be found in the colonial history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

But this progress of events was soon essen-



tially checked, not so much from any diminution in the spirit of enterprise as through obstacles in the nature of things, and in the mutual relations of states. The course of the trade-wind had carried the stream of European population and commerce with undeviating steadiness to the eastern coast of America ; but after a long period, that coast was at length fully explored, and the regions within easy reach of it occupied and divided into provinces. The East furnished a wide field for trade, and eventually for conquest ; but, besides the objection arising from distance, its thickly peopled coasts afforded little opportunity for colonization in the proper sense. The flags of Portugal and Spain floating over the whole of South America, and the finest regions of the Northern continent, forbade all access to the adventurers of more industrious nations ; and the communities scattered over those vast regions, as far as any thing was known of their condition and prospects, seemed to be falling into a state of more than Asiatic decrepitude. And the other nations of Western Europe, while they continued with the utmost jealousy to maintain their maxims of colonial government, and engaged in ruinous wars to extend or protect their foreign dominions, appeared by degrees to lose their ancient ardour for colonization in the mere eagerness of commercial monopoly. Holland became

notorious only for the misgovernment and want of progress and energy which characterised her numerous but scattered possessions. The French — a nation which deserved better success in the career of colonial enterprise — were not so much ruined by their own errors of management, as fairly beaten out of the field by the superior power of their opponents. And when, by the separation of thirteen American provinces from the crown of Britain, it appeared as if all the fruits of those obstinate contests had been lost at a single blow, it is not to be wondered at, if for a short space the ancient ambition of England to spread her population over the barbarous regions of the earth appeared almost extinct. There were left to us, at that period, only the remnant of our North American possessions, and our West India islands; for our Indian empire, as I have already said, cannot be, nor ever has been, considered in the light of a colony properly so called. Of the first of these regions, now become so important and so interesting, so little was known, that only sixty years ago it was generally believed to have a soil unfit for the food, and a climate for the habitation, of civilised man.\*

\* “Our settlements to the north of the southern parts of New England,” says the author of “Political Essays concerning the present State of the British Empire,” in 1772, “are so exceeding cold, that even the necessities of life are at present raised in them with difficulty.”

The islands, on the other hand, were stationary or actually decaying in prosperity, under their vicious system of slavery, and the growing competition of other tropical countries. The map of the known world seemed nearly filled up.

It would be impossible on the present occasion to dwell on the accidental circumstances which, in addition to the general extension of commercial activity in the present century, have contributed to revive the spirit of colonization. Some of them will fall more directly under our consideration in different parts of our future course. Among the principal, may be mentioned, the excess of unemployed labour and capital at home at the close of the revolutionary war, which gave a sudden impulse to emigration, and converted, in a very few years, neglected districts of forest, such as Upper Canada and New Brunswick, into populous provinces : the events of the war itself, which gave a temporary stimulus to the prosperity of the West India islands, and added greatly to the number of our establishments there, and in other parts of the world : the emancipation of the Spanish and Portugese colonies, which gave us new interests and connections in the Western continent, and opened to us the ocean beyond it : the foundation of our penal settlements in Australia, which, begun as a matter of state necessity, has

created new sources of wealth in a manner entirely unforeseen by its contrivers, and revealed to us, as it were, another New World inviting our occupation. But notwithstanding these favourable events, we have been, until very lately, by no means so advantageously situated for availing ourselves of our position as our ancestors in the earlier times of colonial enterprise. The regions within easy reach of us, fit to serve as outlets for our population and capital, and owning the dominion of the British crown, are limited in their extent of available soil, and by no means adapted for any great variety of production. British North America is a region well fitted for the multiplication of a hardy and prosperous people — *magna parens frugum, magna virum* — but not for the creation of much surplus wealth. Our Western tropical possessions, and others of comparatively easy access — such as the Cape of Good Hope — whatever their value may be for the production of wealth, are evidently not fitted for the reception of the surplus of our people. And although the prejudices which have so long made the transfer of British capital and subjects to foreign countries, such as the United States of North America and the new republics of the South, a thing to be strenuously discountenanced, are now undoubtedly diminishing, still the difference of laws and usages,

even where that of language does not exist, will always discourage this species of expatriation, while there are other channels by which the overflow may discharge itself. The only available regions which unite the three chief conditions of prosperity for young colonies — room and soil for a rapid increase of population — natural advantages for the production of surplus wealth — and a secure dependence on the mother-country for their protection, at least in the first stage of their existence — are those removed from us by half the circumference of the globe. And, with our present means of transport, all our improved skill and increased enterprise has not been, nor can be, successful in overcoming this great obstacle of distance. Not only does the greater expense of the voyage present a serious difficulty in the way of the emigration of the labouring classes, whose services are then peculiarly needed, but the tediousness of communication with the mother-country causes much embarrassment to commerce, produces much disinclination on the part of the better class of colonists to remove there, and impedes the moral and intellectual advance of the community. The consequence of these difficulties has been, that even in those few points of our vast Australian empire which we have hitherto occupied, while the increase of wealth has been

most rapid, that of population has been comparatively slow ; and that by far the greater part of the islands and coasts of the Pacific Ocean, although long ago discovered, remain as yet untouched by European enterprise.\*

Now the circumstance, that we are just on the eve of a revolution, which will, as it were, bring us at once in contact with this distant and inviting quarter of the globe, is what renders the subject of colonization at this moment of peculiar importance. The facilities of steam navigation are now so thoroughly established that the boldest speculations which have hitherto been hazarded as to the changes to be effected by it fall short of the probable reality. Every one has, perhaps, more or less reflected on the character of those changes in oceanic navigation ; a power defying alike the regular trade-wind and currents of the equinoctial seas, and the baffling variable breezes of temperate latitudes, must introduce a steady rapidity of communication hitherto wholly unattainable. But you may not have been led to consider the subject in its peculiar application to the problem of opening the Pacific Ocean and its coasts to European visitors. In the tropical part of both oceans, the winds

\* This lecture was delivered before the recent extraordinary flow of emigration towards Australia ; but this is, perhaps, unlikely to prove more than a temporary deviation from its general course.

blow steadily in a general direction from east to west throughout the year. Even on the coast of the Atlantic, southern Brazil can communicate more easily with Europe than with the northern Brazil. But the phenomena of navigation in the other ocean are still more remarkable. Vessels which have doubled the Cape Horn can pass along the American coast, to the most westerly parts of Mexico, in a very few weeks: it sometimes takes them more than as many months to return. The voyage from Acapulco to the Philippines was usually accomplished in a couple of months — the return frequently occupied the best part of a year. Now for this laborious and unequal communication, steam will substitute the easiest and most certain, owing to the multitude of islands serving as so many stages in the passage, which will any where exist on a line of equal length. But this is not all: steam navigation has, as it were, forced the masters of the isthmus of Suez to open that great highway of the Old World; for the exigencies of trade will in the end triumph over all political obstacles. The same causes will, probably, in a very short time, open the passage across the corresponding isthmus of the new continent at Panama or in Guatemala.\* Already every thing is preparing

\* See Mr. Forbes' work on California, and the "Anniversary Address of W. R. Hamilton, Esq. to the Geographical Society, 1839."

for this great event. Reckoning the distance from England to the isthmus at twenty-five days' voyage, it has been recently calculated that Acapulco will then be reached in about thirty-three; Monterey (the most distant point of the Spanish possessions) in forty; the Columbia river in forty-two; Canton in about seventy, exclusive of stoppages. I mention these numbers, not with any idea of their positive accuracy, but in order to familiarize us with the general truth, that all this remote quarter of the earth is likely to be placed at once — without preparation or gradual progress — within our immediate reach. The wide and fertile western coast of North America, and the innumerable islands of the Pacific, will be even more accessible than the ports of the present United States were to our earliest settlers; and Australia itself will be approached by a far shorter and easier route than that which has hitherto been taken. It is true, indeed, that while steam navigation continues at its present scale of expense, it may be thought that it will scarcely be of material service for the purpose of emigration; but even should this obstacle not be overcome, speedy and regular communication with the mother-country, the first of all benefits to new settlements, will assuredly be attained. And they know little of the rapid march of British enterprise, who are



not aware that there exist at this moment capital and labour ready and applicable to the utmost extent of employment which colonization can furnish, and only waiting to be so applied until such facilities as these are afforded. The next fifty years, therefore, will, in all probability, see a change analogous in character, and more than equal in extent, to that which was effected in the first half century after the landing of the Spaniards in America. Whatever revolutions may await Europe at home, her destinies of foreign conquest and domination seem fixed and unalterable, as far as any thing future can be so. And it is fearful to reflect on the portentous results, for good or for evil, which those changes may have, according as they are in the first instance directed. The mere economical developement of colonies will indeed proceed, according to the fertility and other advantages of the soil on which they are established, with almost certain prosperity; yet even this may be materially checked and retarded by mistaken commercial policy on the part of the mother-country. But in the far more important matter of their moral and social progress, they are dependent, not on their own resources, but on the original impulse at first communicated, and subsequently directed by the parent-state. On that first impulse may be said to depend the

ultimate issue of order or anarchy, religion or irreligion, social happiness or the barbarism of insulated life.

In order to arrive at sound conclusions respecting the management of colonial establishments, we shall find it necessary to illustrate the subject by ample reference to the history of former and existing colonies, and the policy which European states have at different times pursued respecting them. It will, however, be at once understood, that in this comprehensive view we shall not include every species of establishment which passes by modern usage under the general name of colony. That word is now applied, in ordinary and official language, to every foreign possession indiscriminately. Insulated posts, occupied with a view to military strength or the protection of trade, such as Gibraltar or Malta, are not within the narrower sense in which we must employ it. We must exclude, likewise, subject provinces or empires, such as that of India, in which colonization in the proper sense is not only unknown but prohibited. Nor shall we find it necessary to dwell at any length on that class of settlements which consists, in fact, of mere emporia or factories, established for the facilitation of commerce in barbarous regions, and not in themselves productive of wealth ; such as the greater part of the establish-

ments of the English, French, and Portuguese on the coasts of Africa. A colony, in the sense which for our present purpose we attach to the word, is a foreign possession, of which the lands are occupied wholly or partially by emigrants from the mother-country.

Such were the ἀποικίαι of the Greeks, the *coloniæ* of the Romans, from which latter nation we have borrowed the name itself. But while there are important analogies to be traced between that course of colonization by which the ancient Greeks extended their language and their manners over so large a portion of the earth, and that pursued by European nations in recent times, there are also strong and remarkable features of contrast, by attending to which we may perhaps more distinctly apprehend the fundamental principles of modern policy in this matter.

In the first place, neither the Phœnicians nor the Greeks, the two great colonizing nations of antiquity, ever appear to have comprised in their idea of a colony the notion of subjection to the mother-country. Each of their settlements was founded by a detached body of the people — a branch cut off, and inserted into a new soil. The emigrants carried with them their religious and civil usages, their language, and their laws; but they never dreamed of retaining any sub-

stantial connection with the metropolis, further than a certain prescriptive respect. What was the extent of the duties which that prescriptive respect enjoined, was, as my hearers are well aware, a question often debated between colonies and their parent states, and generally decided according to the interest of the moment. But the relation of sovereign and subject, between distinct cities in the Grecian sense of the word, were created by conquest or voluntary surrender only — it never followed on colonization. Heeren has remarked that, among the maritime nations of antiquity, the Carthaginians alone possessed the art of retaining their colonies under their government. But their so-called colonies, like those of the Dutch in modern times, were, with very few exceptions, emporia or factories only; establishments for the purpose of trade, not the germs of future nations. Scarcely any distinct people or state of antiquity claimed descent from the Carthaginians.

On the other hand, the fundamental principles of modern colonization have always been those of exclusive dominion, generally of exclusive trade. The former has often been jealously preserved only for the sake of the latter; often, too, from the feeling of national pride, and an imaginary sense of power in extensive possessions. It has been observed by Adam Smith

and others, that the colonies of the English in North America, out of which the United States have been formed, were founded more nearly on an ancient model than those of any other modern nation. In other words, the original colonists were more nearly independent; they rather came from England than were sent by England; they administered themselves, for some time at least, according to their own pleasure, and always retained a considerable share of municipal freedom. But as soon as those plantations became of sufficient importance to claim the attention of the mother-country, their executive power was immediately vested in governors appointed by the crown; their trade was controlled by navigation acts; and they were soon regarded as completely as integral parts of the empire as Wales or Scotland.

In the next place (and this distinction is nearly connected with the last), a Grecian colony was always, emphatically, “a people;” a modern colony is “a territory.” Each little community which settled on the shores of the Mediterranean or the Euxine was complete, however diminutive: it had its regular gradation of classes—its priests, its patricians, its free burgesses, its slaves, It was (to use a quaint illustration) divided by a perpendicular, and not a horizontal, section from the mother-community. All its acts were those

of the public, not of individuals. Lands were divided by the magistrates: the station and occupation of each were assigned by fixed rules. The republic might expand, but it was as complete a republic at its outset as in its greatest prosperity. The progress of modern colonies has been almost uniformly the reverse. Emigrants have gone forth indiscriminately from all classes of society, but chiefly from that just above the lowest: their only tie has been that of temporary interest, their only control that of the functionaries placed over them by the mother-country. Each man has taken his insulated station, governing his own house after a species of Cyclopean polity; and not until the limits of the province have been explored, and its soil divided, have its scattered inhabitants begun to re-unite, and form themselves into something resembling a community.

The mode of life adopted by the ancients and moderns appears, indeed, most strongly contrasted in the instance of their respective colonies. The original Greeks and Phœnicians were dwellers in cities, their colonists even more universally so. The "city" was with them at once the first element and the completest type of society: population spread over a district only by means of an aggregation of cities. The citizens cultivated the soil immediately around

their walls, so far as was necessary to their subsistence, but they rarely ventured farther from them than a few hours' distance ; and the spaces between the scattered cities were waste, or relinquished to the original inhabitants of the land. Some cities possessed, at an early period after their foundation, a sort of suzerainty over an extensive territory ; others, even when overflowing with wealth and population, seem to have appropriated no more than could be cultivated by men dwelling within the walls : among the great western settlements of the Greeks, Cyrene was an example of the first kind, Massilia of the latter. But the civic population itself never spread over an extent of land. When the swarm became too numerous for the hive, a fresh separation took place of the same character as the first, and the colonists became colonizers in their turn ; an event of too common occurrence in ancient history to render it necessary to refer you to instances.

In the settlement of modern colonies, the prevailing habits and feelings of the individuals composing them have led to the very contrary result. These have been produced by the tendency of society in Europe itself. Two antagonist elements, by their collision and intermixture, have brought that society into its present shape. Antiquity, to make use of a

remark which I believe is first to be found in the pages of Schiller, but which has often been repeated since, seemed to regard man as existing for the sake of the commonwealth ; modern institutions consider the commonwealth as created for the benefit of the individual man. The little republics of Roman origin, scattered more especially over the south and west of Europe, perpetuated the character of ancient civilisation ; concentration of families, republican usages, respect and love for institutions, and self-imposed restrictions ; the habit, in each citizen, of regarding himself in all times and places as a citizen, as the member of a body. The opposite principle, carried even to excess, was the characteristic of feudal usages. The lord, insulated in his castle, sought more and more to detach himself from all connection with his fellows which might abridge his individual freedom. The peasants were, of necessity, obliged to live in masses congregated together ; but they lived without mutual ties : the principle which held them together was merely that of common subjection to the lord and the priest—a bond of union from which they were always trying to escape. Of common rights, of reciprocal guarantees for those rights, they knew nothing, except in those comparatively rare instances in which the village became changed in the course



of time into the enfranchised borough. And as by far the greater bulk of the population, in agricultural countries, was subjected to the feudal and not the corporate government, this tendency has left a much more striking impress on modern habits than the other. At the present day, the first desire of the peasant in every part of Europe, until he has acquired his independence, his first exercise of will, when he has acquired it, is not to obtain corporate rights or civil freedom, but to become a proprietor — to acquire the sole dominion over a morsel of land — a change from which experience has taught him to expect little, if any, physical advantage, but which he longs for, nevertheless, as for the satisfaction of a passion: of his craving for what, from father to son, has been regarded by his race as their ideal good.

It is easy to conceive the manner in which this tendency acts, when the European is suddenly transferred from his narrow sphere of action at home to the liberty of a new country. His first impulse, if a man of spirit and energy, is to separate from his brethren, to plunge into the wilderness, to erect his own domestic monarchy apart from all others. Hence the rapid spread over the surface of territories extensive enough to accommodate twenty or an hundred fold the number of occupants who divide it be-

tween them. Hence the comparative rarity of large towns in districts colonized by Europeans, — a fact, however, to which we shall find exceptions, produced by peculiar social circumstances, when we examine more closely the history of particular settlements. Hence the want, in most colonies, of municipal polity, of orders and degrees, of binding customs and recognised rights, and that dislike or contempt for old usages and institutions which contrasts so strongly with the habits of the free states of antiquity. As to the economical effects of this tendency to dispersion, both beneficial and disadvantageous, we shall have abundant opportunity to trace them on a future occasion: there is, indeed, no question connected with colonial policy which, at the present day, excites more attention.

In one very important respect, the effects of this tendency of modern life have produced a most disadvantageous contrast between our colonies and those of the ancients — I mean the treatment of the original occupants of the soil on which settlements are planted. It is difficult to conceive how any colony can be established — in other words, how civilization, and light, and religion itself, can be extended on the earth — without great danger of injustice, and even of cruelty, towards these unfortunate

people. When men superior in intelligence and in power are brought into contact with their feeblers brethren, when they are turned loose among them, without the possibility of a complete, efficient, and, above all, a disinterested control, to expect that they will not grossly abuse their power, is to imagine that the evil principle of human nature will be rendered harmless by diminished restraints and an extended sphere of action. It is a dark and perplexing problem, how far we may be justified, after all, in availing ourselves of advantages of which the exercise seems practically inseparable from the commission of wrong and the infliction of suffering. But one thing is certain, that both institutions and habits may very materially moderate, or render more active, this fertile cause of crime and misery ; and those of antiquity were admirably calculated to check it. The Greek colonists, no doubt, were often at war with surrounding tribes ; and, when they were the strongest, often guilty of great injustice towards them. But there was nothing in their position which rendered the extermination, or absolute subjection, of those tribes either necessary or desirable. The acquisition of extensive territory was hardly an object with them. They would scarcely have known what to do with it, when acquired. On the contrary, the prosperity of their neighbours,

if not too powerful, was generally for their interest ; for they often supported themselves, not so much by their own agricultural resources, as by trade with less civilzied producers. And when, as in Sicily and part of Asia Minor, the country at last became completely Hellenized, it seems to have been less by the spread of single communities, than by the accumulation of separate "civitates" constantly increasing in number, and into which the native population was gradually absorbed. To modern European settlers, on the other hand, whose desire it is to spread themselves as so many individual lords over the soil, the unfortunate beings whom they displace serve as constant incitements to savage cruelty, or to still worse avarice. If numerous and patient, the temptation is to reduce them to a servile or quasi servile state for the sake of profit. If few and warlike, perpetual hostilities are declared between them and the new comers, until either the savages are exterminated, or, as has happened more than once in Spanish America, the colonists are expelled, and the original forest spreads again over the relics of a brief civilization. Add to this, that the Grecian, wherever he was placed, lived under the restraints of laws and customs which he loved, and of the public opinion of his small society. The modern planter, escaped, for the most part, from feudal

or monarchical tyranny, or what he habitually regarded as such, sees in freedom only another name for license and anarchy, and has no more exciting pleasure than in absolute emancipation from all control, whether over his interests or his passions. "The colonies of the Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Greeks," to use the language of M. de Sismondi \*, "civilized barbarian nations by their contact: modern Europeans have everywhere destroyed that degree of civilization which they found: we have barbarized those nations which we call barbarous, by forcing them to renounce those arts which they had themselves invented." †

Still, we must not permit ourselves to exaggerate this contrast (as the eloquent writer whom I have just quoted appears to me to have done), nor to forget that there are points of difference between the relations of modern and ancient colonies to indigenous tribes, occasioned by circumstances wholly out of the control of the colonists. The Greeks, in their emi-

\* Études sur l'Économie Politique, vol. ii. p. 153.

† "As the contagion of European intercourse has extended itself among them," says Bishop Broughton of the natives of New Holland, "they gradually lose the better properties of their own character, and appear to acquire in exchange none but the most objectionable and degrading of ours." — *Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines*, 1837, p. 11.

grations, were not brought into contact with nations of another race and colour — the most marked of all the divisions which separate portions of the human family. Nor were they possessed of such enormous advantages over the native tribes : they had not the same mechanical powers, the same destructive implements which we wield, while the natives themselves were higher in the scale of civilization. There was not so great a superiority, and, consequently, less temptation to abuse it. Nay, they were often restrained by motives of prudence and fear from adopting any other than an amicable policy towards them. It has been truly observed, that classical antiquity was acquainted only with barbarians, not with savages. No state of life like that of the American Indian, or the Hottentot, is described by ancient writers, except in the traditions of the Læstrygons and the Cyclops. They were spared, therefore, the greatest moral difficulty of colonization. It would be most unjust towards our own immediate predecessors and contemporaries, to assert that no efforts have been used, in modern times, to benefit and civilize this unhappy portion of mankind. Such attempts have been honestly, zealously, and perseveringly made in many quarters, and under various auspices. We may, perhaps, think, that they have generally been misdirected : to this

subject we shall on future occasions direct our particular attention : but it is certainly not without some experience of such endeavours, and of their utter and discouraging failures that so many wise and good men have acquiesced in the melancholy doctrine that the wild man is even more irreclaimable than the wild animal, and that both must be driven back, within the ever-shrinking boundaries of the wilderness, by the advance of the European population.

Although the name of colony has been derived from the Romans by the nations of modern Europe, yet the Romans were not, in the sense which we now attribute to the word, a colonizing people. Their emigrants, in the times of the republic, were not sent forth to reclaim the wilderness, but to garrison their outposts, or to enjoy the lands of which the chance of war had deprived other inhabitants no less civilized than themselves. And even under the empire, their colonies were, for the most part, of the warlike order, sent to occupy frontier territories on a system which is still pursued by the military empires of Russia and Austria. Some of their settlements, however, in these later times, evidently partook, to a greater degree, of the character of those of the Greeks, or of modern nations ; and it is to be regretted, that, rich as we are in relics of Roman jurisprudence and his

tory, we really know so little of the internal affairs of these colonies — such, for example, as those which were established among ourselves in Britain — and are so little able to distinguish accurately between them and the other municipal foundations of the empire.

It is with regret that I find myself obliged to dismiss, with these scanty observations, a subject so interesting as the comparison of ancient with modern colonization. It is, I am aware, a topic possessing more attraction here than many of those on which I shall have to expatiate at greater length. But, besides that I feel my own inability to do justice to it, it belongs, moreover, to a different province from mine ; and the few remarks which I have made upon it may, perhaps, serve you as hints for the pursuit of an inquiry which can be better conducted by yourselves, with such assistance as the studies of this place so amply furnish. Proceeding, therefore, with a less ambitious course of investigation, I shall next lay before you, by way of introduction, a cursory sketch of the colonial history of modern nations : first, of Spain and Portugal ; next, of other foreign states ; and, lastly, of England : chiefly with regard to the developement of wealth in the colonies, and their economical relations with Europe. This branch of my subject will occupy my present course. I am



aware that severe synthetists may be of opinion that the more regular process of instruction is first to lay down principles, and then to illustrate by examples. But I have so often, in my own case, found the benefit of the opposite course, I have found that principles were so far more easily understood and vividly impressed on the mind when the memory has already been in possession of a body of facts, whereby to test and apply them, that I cannot but imagine the teaching of nature, which first presents us with appearances and then invites us to analyse them, to have many advantages over the other system. The next division of my subject will be, the economical effects of colonization on the mother-country. Under this head, we shall have to consider the results of emigration, and of the exportation of capital, as affecting the prosperity of the parent state; addressing ourselves, perhaps, chiefly to questions which are not very seriously debated at the present day, but which, nevertheless, deserve notice and solution. Pursuing the same subject, we shall direct our attention to the effects of what is called the "Colonial System" of commerce. By the colonial system, to define it in the words of a modern writer\*, "it is laid down as the general rule, that all the produce of the

\* Quarterly Review, vol. xxvi.

colonies destined for the European market shall be brought to the mother-country for consumption, or re-exportation : on the other hand, that the mother-country shall furnish all the supplies required by the colonies ; and that the conveyance of the produce shall be confined to the national shipping." This is the policy, which, with very little deviation, has been pursued by European governments with respect to their colonies, and under which those colonies have grown up : although considerably modified of late years, its principles are still maintained by our own ; and the existence of such a monopoly is almost always either expressly or tacitly assumed, by those who advocate the system of maintaining *adult* colonies in dependence on strictly economical grounds. It therefore requires minute examination, both on the principles of our science and as to the evidence afforded by facts. We shall next consider the question of the revenue supposed to be derivable from colonies by the mother-country ; a problem, indeed, intimately connected with the former. Having completed this division, we shall proceed to study the economical phenomena of colonization in the settled country. The principal of these are the effects produced by the application of combined capital and labour to a new soil. These we must trace under the double aspect in which colonial esta-

blishments present themselves ; — namely, as affording an outlet and a refuge for emigrants, and as producing new or more abundant articles of exportable wealth. Some colonies answer to the former description only, some to the latter, and some unite the advantages of both. And, in examining this part of our subject, we shall soon find our attention called to the general difficulty experienced in new settlements *raising exportable produce*, of obtaining a supply of labour adequate to the demand. The various modes by which it has been attempted to secure that supply will then fall under our observation. First, the employment of labourers of native race, which has taken place so largely in Mexico and Peru, and partially in other colonies, as the Cape of Good Hope. This is a subject of more practical interest, perhaps, at the present time, than it has generally been to us, as the spread of our establishments in the South Sea may bring us into contact with races more numerous, and with greater aptitude for social industry, than those with which English settlers have hitherto been conversant. Next, the system of slave labour, with the effects produced by the abandonment of it: and that of convict labour. In colonies where none of these artificial sources of supply (if such they may be termed) exist, the deficiency is, of course, more severely felt; and various modes have been at different

times resorted to for keeping up a supply of hired free labourers, which have, in general, proved wholly ineffective. I need scarcely mention to you (so great has been the interest excited of late years on this subject), that the suggestion has recently been made, and urged with great force of argument, of raising a revenue for this purpose by the sale of waste lands in unoccupied districts. It has been also proposed, and is an important feature in the scheme, that the sale should be at higher prices than have hitherto been usual. By this means it is thought that two great objects may be attained — the securing an amount of disposable labour by regular immigration, and the preventing that rapid dispersion over the soil which has already been mentioned as so characteristic of modern colonists, wherever land is easy of acquisition. The experiment is now in course of trial in South Australia; and, perhaps, before we arrive at this part of our subject, we may be possessed of more materials than are yet in our hands, for pronouncing on its probable success, and contrasting it with the system of free grants and of sales at low prices, which have prevailed at different times in our older colonies. With a view to the commercial developement of new settlements, we shall perhaps find it necessary to return again to the consideration of the so-called

colonial system, and having traced its effects on the mother-country, observe also its bearing on the colonies.

Before concluding our course, we shall enter also into miscellaneous details respecting the foundation and government of colonies, the choice of sites, the laying out of lands, the establishment of internal communications, the suggestions of policy and humanity with respect to the treatment of native races: civil and ecclesiastical government: defence: disposal of lands: revenues. Such will be the principal outlines of my subject, should I be enabled to accomplish the plan which I have proposed to myself. Should my course be carried to a conclusion, it will be terminated by some general reflections as to the limits of the profitable dominion of a mother-country over her colonies; how long to retain, and when to abandon them; — a question of deep and momentous interest, not admitting (whatever enthusiasts may think) of any theoretical solution applicable to all cases, and yet which cannot be safely explored except by the light of scientific knowledge. Whatever may be the conclusions at which we shall arrive, we shall learn, at least, to distrust those flattering declamations, addressed in reality to vanity and not to reason, which represent foreign dominions as necessarily increasing the wealth and power of the state which holds them — declamations by

which both the friends and foes of England have been misled so often, and so fatally, and in such utter defiance of all experience. "Render her colonies useless, or deprive her of them, and you break down her last wall, you fill up her last ditch." Such were the words of Talleyrand; and yet Talleyrand had lived to see our country lose at a blow a whole empire of colonies, and rise again as if a burden had been removed from her shoulders, and not a limb of her strength torn away. "I want ships, colonies, and commerce," said Napoleon; and many, who will scarcely allow the French emperor credit for sagacity on subjects with which he was thoroughly conversant, are in the habit of quoting him as an authority on this, which he had never studied, where he spoke in the mere spirit of pride and self-reliance, and where, after all, he only borrowed the language of our own politicians. We shall have to require strict economical proof, if it be contended that national wealth is promoted by the maintenance of this or that species of colonial establishment; and to have that ground fairly defended or fairly abandoned before another ground is taken, and its advantage to national defence, or any other public object, insisted on in the argument.

Perhaps we shall, after all, be led to find a type of our modern theories of colonial policy in the old story of the Persian king and his physician.

The specific recommended to the royal patient was, to take exercise with a racket, in the handle of which some wonderful elixir was said to be concealed. The king used the racket and recovered ; but the elixir, when sought for, was not to be found : exertion and hope had accomplished the miracle, without the aid of the mystery. The advantages of colonial dominion have been to the industrious nations of Europe an imaginary elixir of the same description. They have been for centuries sought after with the utmost eagerness of rivalry. It is interesting, and yet almost humiliating, to trace the progress of that great movement, and to mark how its real workings were going on in a manner utterly misunderstood by the contrivers of them. We find the philosophers and the statesmen of every country in Europe laying down set theories as to the encouragement of colonies : founding them on notions respecting the benefits to be derived from a monopoly of precious metals, or from the conquest of a wide tributary dominion, or from exclusive trade : scarcely one of which expected prizes has ever been realised under any circumstances, or for the shortest period ; nay, gravely endeavouring to prove, in endless treatises and debates, in the face of all experience, that such advantages had been obtained ; or pointing out, by circuitous arguments, causes of temporary failure ; reasons why things had

not yet happened which it was impossible should ever happen. Meanwhile the colonies grew and expanded. They afforded an outlet for the enterprising and the discontented ; they stimulated commerce by the offer of fresh markets, not indeed secured to a particular class of producers, as their founders had imagined, but furnishing rewards eventually to superior energy and industry alone. The object was attained ; prosperity and colonization advanced together ; but it was the developement of strength by exercise, the zeal and the activity thus aroused, the substantial means and not the imaginary end, which remunerated national enterprise. Those nations which sought to attain the end without using the means — to which by far the fairest portion of the unoccupied world had fallen, but which wanted industry and intelligence to use it — found their possessions as utterly valueless to themselves as the racket in the story would have been, if held idly in the hand of the patient.

By placing the benefits of colonies in a truer light, we shall learn to value, even more highly, those of colonization. We shall be able to contrast the unquestionable advantage of opening new markets to our trade and outlets to our population, with the very doubtful policy of securing those markets by prohibition, and keeping our customers in subjection by force. Our



position and our power, the unrivalled activity of our people, and the gigantic means placed at our disposal by the progress of events, were given us not to extend a barren empire, but to sow the seed of future nations. What the narrow Mediterranean was to the Greeks, the sea of the world, the ocean, is to us — its waters our highway, its unreclaimed coasts our inheritance. And if it were safe to speculate by the aid of mere analogy, as to the designs of Providence, we might perhaps conjecture, without irreverence, that the vast extent of these undeveloped resources, and the sudden acquisition of new powers by which they are to be made available, are indications to us that the work of human society, with its present character and agencies, is not yet fulfilled — that new prospects and new responsibilities are in store for the nations — that the philosophical dreams which, even a century ago, assumed the form of prophecy, may yet receive their accomplishment:—

Westward the course of empire takes its way:

The four first acts already past,

The drama closes with the closing day:

Time's noblest offspring is his last.

THE END.

LONDON:

Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,  
New-Street-Square.

