

The Examiner.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY, WHEN FREEBORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC, MAY SPEAK FREE."—EURIPIDES.

VOL. II.]

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND, MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 1849.

[No. 78.]

COST OF COLONIAL MISGOVERNMENT.

There is a passage in Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," relating to the expense of Colonial Government, which deserves to be printed in letters of gold:—

"The expense of their (the English colonies) own civil government has always been moderate. It has generally been confined to what was necessary for paying competent salaries to the governor, to the judges, and some other officers of police, and for maintaining a few of the most useful public works. The expense of the civil establishment of Massachusetts Bay, before the commencement of the present (1776) disturbances, used to be about £18,000 a year; and that of New Hampshire and Rhode Island £3500; that of Connecticut £4000; that of New York and Pennsylvania £4,500 each; that of New Jersey £1200; that of Virginia and South Carolina £8000 each. The civil establishments of Nova Scotia and Georgia are partly supported by an annual grant of Parliament. But Nova Scotia pays, besides, about £7000 a year towards the public expenses of the Colony; and Georgia about £2500 a year. All the different civil establishments in North America, in short, exclusive of those of Maryland and North Carolina, of which no exact account has been got, did not, before the commencement of the present disturbances, cost the inhabitants above £64,700 a year; an ever memorable example at how small an expense three millions of people may not only be governed, but well governed."

The expense of civil government in the British Colonies in 1848 is on a very different scale. The population of these Colonies (omitting the military establishments of Gibraltar, Malta, and St. Helena, and the diplomatic establishment of Hong Kong), is 4,539,424. The expense of local government in these Colonies amounts to £3,468,668. The population of the British colonies in 1848 is only one half greater than the population of the English colonies in North America, in 1770; but the expense of local government in the former is 53 times as great as it was in the latter. The civil list alone of British Guiana, with its hundred thousand inhabitants, is more than a half of the whole cost of civil government in the old North American colonies, with their three millions. Nova Scotia, with 178,000 inhabitants, has an annual public expenditure of £64,026; the "old thirteen" presented "an ever memorable example at how small an expense three millions of people may not only be governed, but well governed." The modern colonies of England present an equally memorable example of the immense sums that may be expended in governing four millions and a half of people ill.

Adam Smith goes on to observe that "the most important part of the expense of government, that of defence and protection, has constantly fallen upon the mother country." This is not strictly true. The old North American colonies not only maintained their own militia for the purposes of defence, but they bore no inconsiderable part of the aggressive operations against the French settlements. The military expenditure of Great Britain in America at that time was incurred not to defend the colonies, but to carry out the idea of Chatham, that France was to be conquered in America, not in Germany. The North American colonies of France and England were made the battle field of the animosities of these nations. Had the military armaments and expenses required in the "old thirteen," been restricted to what was necessary for their defence, the provincial troops which they raised, and the money they laid out upon them, would have far more than sufficed for their protection. They paid all the costs of their civil government, and more than the legitimate costs of their defence. If governed on the same principle as these settlements were governed, our modern English colonies would be found perfectly adequate to defray the cost both of their own civil government and

their defensive establishments. There is no danger in our day of their being made the battle field of such irrational animosities and hostilities as those between France and England, which, about the middle of the eighteenth century, made North America a scene of savage havoc and desolation.

Leave our colonies to organize their civil government according to the real wants of their respective societies, to maintain their own militia, and, if they please, their own "colonial ships," and they will become loyal and prosperous like the "old thirteen," before the Grenville Stamp Act. Their civil government and their defensive establishments will be "confined to what is necessary for paying competent salaries" to indispensable public servants. And their loyalty to the "old country"—to "home," as it was familiarly called throughout the colonies during the first half of the eighteenth century—will be as devoted and enduring as that which required the Stamp Act, the tea duties, the closing of the port of Boston, the insults to American envoys in London, and the murder of American citizens in New England to destroy.

Earl Grey admits the truth of these views in theory, though we regret to add that his practice is scarcely reconcilable to them. He professes a wish to give local self government to the colonies; to throw upon them the expenses of all their public establishments and servants, except the governors. And he sees clearly that if the governors are to continue in the receipt of salaries such as he wishes, they must be paid by the mother country. In the name alike of the mother country and the colonies, we protest against such exceptional arrangement with respect to governors. Let the colonies be perfectly untrammelled in the administration of their local affairs, and let them bear the whole of the expense. There is no sound reason for the mother country being saddled with the salary of the governor of Jamaica, any more than for the British Islands at large being saddled with the salaries of the Lord Mayor of London, and the provost of Edinburgh.

STATE OF SOCIETY IN CALIFORNIA.

AN AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT.

A LETTER is published in the Washington Union, dated California, Sept. 18, 1848, written by J. L. Folsom, Captain and Assistant Quartermaster, and addressed to Major General Jessup, which contains much interesting intelligence, and especially on some collateral points lost sight of in most other communications. Captain Folsom confirms, to the utmost, all accounts touching the richness and extent of the gold deposits. But we will only quote such portions of his letter as refer to the state of the country, the character of a large proportion of the miners, and the condition of affairs likely to arise out of the causes at present operating in that far-off region. Let all who have emigration in view ponder well what follows. Captain Folsom says:—"I was at the mines about the first of July: at that time the weather there was insufferably hot. I think it by far the most oppressive climate I ever was in. It is much more uncomfortable than the climate of Brazil at the warmest season of the year, and every thing was literally parched up after a drought which had then continued for near three months, and which had five months more to run to the rainy season. The sea breezes, which extend up the valley of the Sacramento, never pass the Sierra Nevada, and seldom penetrate even the lateral valleys and ravines of those mountains, and there was not a breath of air moving among the mines. The sun was blazing down with more than tropical fervour, while his rays were reflected in ten thousand directions from the sides of the hills, until the atmosphere glowed and glimmered like the air in a furnace. I then foresaw (what has since happened) that there would be much sickness among the miners. These people had

deserted their regular occupations; and a complete change of life and an unnatural climate could not fail to act unfavourably upon their health. Their diet was bad, their labours were severe, and they were exposed completely, without shelter in the day time, to a burning sun, and at night to the chilly atmosphere of the mountains. Many of them worked with their feet in the water, and inflamed their blood in a feverish climate, by a free use of ardent spirits. The natural consequence followed. Many are now sick with bilious and intermittent fevers, dysenteries, camp fevers, &c. &c. * *

"Among the people engaged in the mines, there are many runaway sailors, deserters from the army, trappers and mountaineers, who are naturally idle, dissipated, and dissolute; in short, taken in the aggregate, the miners are the very worst kind of labouring population. * * * * *

"It is sufficiently obvious that the country will be prematurely filled by a reckless, excitable, adventurous, and restless population, and that extended agricultural or mechanical improvements are at an end for some years to come. Gambling and all sorts of thoughtless profusion begin to prevail. The present excitement will attract vast numbers of the idle, vicious and dissolute. Refugees from justice from the United States, as well as other countries, will flock to California among the better disposed population, and will find shelter among the almost inaccessible fastnesses of the mountains, where such mines of wealth are now opened. These regions are of vast extent, and are remote from the regular settlements, and from the operation of the laws. In the solitary recesses of the Sierra Nevada, are little clusters of men, with nothing but the trees for their covering, and no protection but their own vigilance and strength. Many of these people are known to possess very large amounts of gold (sometimes as much as twenty thousand dollars) wrapped up in their blankets, where there is no eye to see and no agent to pursue the guilty. Is it strange, when the temptation is so great, that the robber and assassin should be abroad among the mountains? Many robberies and some murders are known already to have occurred; but little attention is excited by these events, where all are in the eager pursuit of wealth. No one can conjecture the extent of these outrages, for living witnesses are not at hand, and "dead men tell no tales." The strong and firm hand of government must be promptly extended to save the country from the most revolting acts of violence.

"It becomes a matter of vital importance, therefore, that the most efficient measures should be taken for the establishment and preservation of good government in California. The governor of the Territory should be a man of the highest possible character for talent, firmness and integrity, and no salary hitherto allowed for similar services in other United States Territories will be an adequate compensation here. Any good laborer can realize fifty per cent. more from his services than the highest government officer now receives, taking the time together, for a year. It will be impossible to organize a good government under suitable men, unless the salaries of every class of government agents are proportioned to the unavoidable expenses to be incurred in the country. I know of no section of the United States Territories which more imperatively requires strong garrisons for the preservation of order. Without them, I believe the whole country will sink into anarchy and the worst possible confusion. But to preserve efficient garrisons in California, the pay of the troops must be raised much above the present miserable pittance allowed by law, and very severe enactments must be passed for the punishment of deserters, and all aiders and abettors in desertion. American troops have never been exposed to such incentives to desertion; and it is no deduction from their high character to say, that additional pay and emoluments for faithful service, and more