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THE TRANSPORTATION QUESTION

The great question of Secondary Punishments has now been settled by experience, so far as the mother country is concerned. It is now known that imprisonment has no effect whatever, either in deterring from crime, or in reforming criminals. Government, albeit most unwilling to recur to the old system of transportation, has been compelled to do so by the unanimous voice of the country; by the difficulty of finding accommodation for the prodigious increase of prisoners in the jails of the kingdom; and by the still greater difficulty, in these days of cheapness and declining incomes, of getting the persons intrusted with the duty of providing additional prison accommodation, to engage in the costly and tedious work of additional erections. An order in council has expressly, and most wisely, authorised a return to transportation, under such regulations as seem best calculated to reform the convicts, and diminish the dread very generally felt in the colonies, of being flooded with an inundation of crime from the mother country. And the principal difficulty felt now is, to find a colony willing to receive the penal settlers, and incur the risks thought to be consequent on their unrestricted admission.

It is not surprising that government should have been driven from the ruinous system of substituting imprisonment for transportation; for the results, even during the short period that it was followed out, were absolutely appalling. The actual augmentation of criminals was the least part of the evil; the increase of serious crimes, in consequence of the hardened offenders not being sent out of the country, but generally liberated after eighteen months' or two years' confinement, was the insupportable evil. The demoralisation so strongly felt and loudly complained of in Van Diemen's Land, from the accumulation of criminals, was rapidly taking place in this country. The persons tried under the aggravation of previous convictions in Scotland, in the three last years, have stood as follows: —

Years.	Total convicted.	Under aggravation of previous convictions.
1846	2936	858
1847	3569	1024
1848	3669	1043

– *Parliamentary Reports*, 1846-48.

So rapid an increase of crimes, and especially among criminals previously convicted, sufficiently demonstrates the inadequacy of imprisonment as a means either of deterring from crimes, or reforming the criminals. The same result appears in England, where the rapid increase of criminals sentenced to transportation, within the same period, demonstrates the total inefficacy of the new imprisonment system.

	Transported.	
Years.	England and Wales.	Scotland.
1846	2805	352
1847	2896	456
1848	3251	459

And of the futility of the hope that the spread of education will have any effect in checking the increase of crime, decisive proof is afforded in the same criminal returns; for from them it appears that the number of educated criminals in England is above twice, in Scotland *above three times and a half that of the uneducated*, – the numbers, during the last three years, being as follows: —

	England and Wales.		Scotland.	
Years.				
	Educated.	Uneducated.	Educated.	Uneducated.
1846	16,963	7,698	3,155	903
1847	19,307	9,050	3,562	1,048
1848	20,176	9,691	3,985	911

– *Parliamentary Returns*, 1846-8.

Nay, what is still more alarming, it distinctly appears, from the same returns, that the proportion of educated criminals to uneducated is *steadily on the increase* in Great Britain. Take the centesimal proportions given in the last returns for England – those of 1848: —

Degrees of Instruction.	1839.	1840.	1841.	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.
Unable to read or write,	33.53	33.32	33.21	32.35	31.00	29.77	30.61	30.66	31.39	31.93
Imperfectly,	53.48	55.57	56.67	58.32	57.60	59.28	58.34	59.51	58.59	56.38
Well,	10.07	8.29	7.40	6.77	8.02	8.12	8.38	7.71	7.79	9.83
Superior,	0.32	0.37	0.45	0.22	0.47	0.42	0.37	0.34	0.28	0.27
Not ascertained,	2.60	2.45	2.27	2.34	2.91	2.41	2.30	1.78	1.60	1.59

– *Parliamentary Returns for England*, 1848, p. 12.

The great increase here is in the criminals who have received an *imperfect education*, which class has increased as much as that of the totally uneducated has diminished. Unhappily, imperfect education is precisely the species of instruction which alone, in the present days of cheapened production and diminishing wages, the great body of the poor are able to give to their children.

Mr Pearson, M.P., who has paid great attention to this subject, and whose high official situation in the city of London gives him such ample means of being acquainted with the practical working of the criminal law, has given the following valuable information in a public speech, which every one acquainted with the subject must know to be thoroughly well founded: —

> "In the year 1810, which is the earliest account that we possess in any of our archives, the number of commitments, of assize and sessions cases, was 5146. In the year 1848, the number of commitments for sessions and assize cases was 30,349. Population during that period had increased but 60 per cent, whilst the commitments for crime had increased 420 per cent. I should not be candid with this assembly if I did not at once say, that there are various disturbing circumstances which intervene, during that period, to prevent the apparent increase of commitments being the real estimate of the actual increase. There was the transition from war to peace. We all know, that from the days of Hollingshed, the old chronicler, it has been said that war takes to itself a portion of the loose population, who find in the casualties of war, its dangers, rewards and profligate indulgences, something like a kindred feeling to the war made upon society by the predatory classes. Hence we find that, when war ceases, a number of that class of the community are thrown back on the honest portion of society, which, during the period of war, had been drained off. Besides this, there are other co-operating causes. There is the improved police,

the constabulary, rural or metropolitan, who undoubtedly detect many of those offences which were formerly committed with impunity. There is also the act of parliament for paying prosecutors and witnesses their expenses, which led to an increased number of prosecutors in proportion to the number of crimes actually detected. These circumstances have, no doubt, exercised a considerable influence over the increase in the commitments; but after having for 35 years paid the closest attention to the subject, having filled, and still filling, a high office in regard to the administration of the law in the city of London, I am bound to say, that, making full deduction from the number which every feeling of anxiety to raise the country from the imputation of increasing in its criminal character dictates – after making every deduction, I am bound with shame and humility to acknowledge, that it leaves a very large amount of increase in the actual, the positive number of commitments for crime. Sir, this is indeed a humiliating acknowledgment; but happily the statistics of this country, in other particulars, warrant us in drawing comfort from the conviction, that even this fact affords no true representation of the state of the moral character of the people – no evidence of their increasing degradation of character or conduct, in anything like the proportion or degree that those statistics would appear to show. I appeal to history – I appeal to the recollection of every man in this assembly, who, like myself, has passed the meridian of life, whether society has not advanced in morals as well as in arts, science, and literature, and everything which tends to improve the social character of the people. Let any man who has read not our country's history alone, but the tales and novels of former times – and we must frequently look to them, rather than to the records of history, for a faithful transcript of the morals of the age in which they were written, – let any man recur to the productions of Fielding and of Smollett, and say whether the habits, manners, and morals of the great masses of our population are not materially improved within the last century. Great popular delusions prevail as to the causes of the increase of commitments for criminal offences in this country, which I deem it to be my duty to endeavour to dispel. Some ascribe the increase to the want of instruction of our youth, some to the absence of religious teaching, some to the increased intemperance, and some to the increased poverty of the people. I assert that there is no foundation for the opinions that ascribe the increase of crime to these causes. If the absence of education were the cause of crime, surely crime would be found to have diminished since education has increased. For the purpose of comparing the present and past state of education, for its influence upon the criminal statistics of the nation, I will not go back to the time when the single Bible in the parish was chained to a pillar in the church; or when the barons affixed their cross to documents, from inability to write their names. I refer to dates, and times, and circumstances within our own recollection. In the year 1814 the report of the National Society says, there were only 100,000 children receiving the benefit of education. Now there are above 1,000,000 under that excellent institution, besides the tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands who are receiving education under the auspices of the Lancasterian Society Schools. But some may say that the value of education is not to be estimated by numbers. Well then, I reject numbers, if you please, and try it by its quality. I ask any man who listens to me if he does not know that the national schools, and other gratuitous establishments in this country, now give privileges in education which children in a respectable condition of life could hardly obtain, such was the defective state of instruction in this country, 40 or 50 years ago. (Cheers.) No man, therefore, can say that the increase of crime is attributable to the absence

> of education. If it were so, with education increased 800 per cent during the last 30 years, crime would have diminished, instead of increased, 400 per cent." —*Times*, Aug. 28, 1849.

The immense *expense* with which the maintenance of such prodigious numbers of prisoners in jail is attended, is another most serious evil, especially in these days of retrenchment, diminished profits, and economy. From the last Report of the Jail Commissioners for Scotland – that for 1848 – it appears that the average cost of each prisoner over the whole country for a year, after deducting his earnings in confinement, is £16, 7s. 6d. As this is the cost after labour has been generally introduced into prisons, and the greatest efforts to reduce expense have been made, it may fairly be presumed that it cannot be reduced lower. The average number of prisoners constantly in jail in Scotland is now about 3500, which, at £16, 7s. 6d. a-head, will come to about £53,000 a-year.[1] Applying this proportion to the 60,000 criminals, now on an average constantly in confinement in the two islands,[2] the annual expense of their maintenance cannot be under a million sterling. The prison and county rates of England alone, which include the cost of prosecutions, are £1,300,000 a-year. But that result, enormous as it is in a country in which poor-rates and all local burdens are so rapidly augmenting, is but a part of the evil. Under the present system a thief is seldom transported, at least in Scotland, till he has been three or four years plying his trade; during which period his gains by depredations, and expenses of maintenance, cannot have averaged less than £25 yearly. Thus it may with safety be affirmed, that every thief transported from Scotland *has cost the country, before he goes, at least £100*; and that has been expended in training him up to such habits of hardened depravity, that he is probably as great a curse to the colony to which he is sent, as he had proved a burden to that from which he was conveyed. *Sixteen pounds* would have been the cost of his transportation in the outset of his career, when, from his habits of crime not being matured, he had a fair chance of proving an acquisition, instead of a curse, to the place of his destination.

As the question of imprisonment or transportation, so far as Great Britain and Ireland are concerned, is now settled by the demonstrative evidence of the return of a reluctant government to the system which in an evil hour they abandoned, it may seem unnecessary to go into detail in order to show how absolutely necessary it was to do so; and how entirely the boasted system of imprisonment, with all its adjuncts of separation, silence, hard labour, and moral and religious instruction, has failed either in checking crime, or producing any visible reformation in the criminals. No one practically acquainted with the subject ever entertained the slightest doubt that this would be the case; and in two articles directed to the subject in this magazine, in 1844, we distinctly foretold what the result would be.[3] To those who, following in the wake of prelates or philanthropists, how respectable soever, such as Archbishop Whately, who know nothing whatever of the subject except from the fallacious evidence of parliamentary committees, worked up by their own theoretical imaginations, we recommend the study of the Tables below, compiled from the parliamentary returns since the imprisonment system began, to show to what a pass the adoption of their rash visions has brought the criminal administration of the country.[4]

It is not surprising that it should be so, and that all the pains taken, and philanthropy wasted, in endeavouring to reform criminals in jail in this country, or hindering them from returning to their old habits when let loose within it, should have proved abortive. Two reasons of paramount efficacy have rendered them all nugatory. The first of these is, that the theory regarding the possibility of reforming offenders when in prison, or suffering punishment in this country, is wholly erroneous,

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[1] *Prison Report 1848*, p. 73.

[2] In 1848, the number committed for serious offences was 73,770.

[3] See the "Increase of Crime, and Imprisonment, and Transportation," *Blackwood's Magazine*, May and July 1844, vol. lv. p. 532, and vol. lvi. p. 1.

[4] Table showing the number of commitments for serious offences in the undermentioned years in England, Scotland, and Ireland: —

and proceeds on an entire misconception of the principles by which alone such a reformation can in any case be effected. In prison, how solitary soever, you can work only on the *intellectual* faculties. The *active* powers or feelings can receive no development within the four walls of a cell, for they have no object by which they can be called forth. But nine-tenths of mankind in any rank, and most certainly nineteen-twentieths of persons bred as criminals, are wholly inaccessible to the influence of the intellect, considered as a restraint or regulator of their passions. If they had been capable of being influenced in that way, they would never have become criminals. Persons who fall into the habits which bring them under the lash of the criminal law, are almost always those in whom, either from natural disposition, or the unhappy circumstances of early habits and training, the intellectual faculties are almost entirely in abeyance, so far as self-control is concerned; and any development they have is only directed to procuring gratification for, or furthering the objects of the senses. To address to such persons the moral discipline of a prison, however admirably conducted, is as hopeless as it would be to descant to a man born blind on the objects of sight, or to preach to an ignorant boor in the Greek or Hebrew tongue. Sense is to them all in all. Esau is the true prototype of this class of men; they are always ready to exchange their birthright for a mess of pottage.

No length of solitary confinement, or scarce any amount of moral or religious instruction, can awaken in them either the slightest repentance for their crimes, or the least power of self-control when temptation is again thrown in their way. They regard the period of imprisonment as a blank in their lives – a time of woful monotony and total deprivation of enjoyment, which only renders it the more imperative on them, the moment it is terminated, to begin anew with fresh zest their old enjoyments. Their first object is to make up for months of compulsory sobriety by days of voluntary intoxication. At the close of a short period of hideous *saturnalia*, they are generally involved in some fresh housebreaking or robbery, to pay for their long train of indulgence; and soon find themselves again immured in their old quarters, only the more determined to run through the same course of forced regularity and willing indulgence. They are often able to feign reformation, so as to impose on their jailors, and obtain liberation on pretended amendment of character. But it is rarely if ever that they are really reclaimed; and hence the perpetual recurrences of the same characters in the criminal courts; till the magistrates, tired of imprisoning them, send them to the assizes or quarter-sessions for transportation. Even then, however, their career is often far from being terminated in this country. The keepers of the public penitentiaries become tired of keeping them. When they cannot send them abroad, their cells are soon crowded; and they take advantage of a feigned amendment to open the prison doors and let them go. They are soon found again in their old haunts, and at their old practices. At the spring circuit held at Glasgow in April 1848, when the effects of the recent imprisonment mania were visible, – out of 117 ordinary criminals indicted, no less than *twenty-two* had been sentenced to transportation at Glasgow, for periods not less than seven years, *within the preceding two years*; and the previous conviction and sentence of transportation was charged as an aggravation of their new offence against each in the indictment.

The next reason which renders imprisonment, in an old society and amidst a redundant population, utterly inefficacious as a means of reforming criminals is, that, even if they do imbibe better ideas and principles during their confinement, they find it impossible on their liberation to get into any honest employment, or gain admission into any well-doing circle, where they may put their newly-acquired principles into practice. If, indeed, there existed a government or parochial institution, into which they might be received on leaving prison, and by which they might be marched straightway to the nearest seaport, and there embarked for Canada or Australia, a great step would be made towards giving them the means of durable reformation. But as there is none such in existence, and as they scarcely ever are possessed of money enough, on leaving prison, to carry them across the Atlantic, they are of necessity obliged to remain in their own country – and that, to persons in their situation, is certain ruin. In new colonies, or thinly-peopled countries, such as Australia or Siberia, convicts, from the scarcity of labour, may in general be able to find employment; and from the absence

of temptation, and the severance of the links which bound them to their old associates, they are often there found to do well. But nothing of that sort can be expected in an old and thickly-peopled country, where the competition for employment is universal, and masters, having the choice of honest servants of untainted character, cannot be expected to take persons who have been convicted of crimes, and exposed to the pollutions of a jail.

Practically speaking, it is *impossible* for persons who have been in jail to get into any honest or steady employment in their own country; and if they do by chance, or by the ignorance of their employers of their previous history, get into a situation, it is ere long discovered, by the associates who come about them, where they have been, and they speedily lose it. If you ask any person who has been transported in consequence of repeated convictions, why he did not take warning by the first, the answer uniformly is, that he could not get into employment, and was obliged to take to thieving, or starve. Add to this that the newly-reformed criminal, on leaving jail, and idling about, half starved, in search of work, of necessity, as well as from inclination, finds his way back to his old residence, where his character is known, and he is speedily surrounded by his old associates, who, in lieu of starving integrity, offer him a life of joyous and well-fed depravity. It can hardly be expected that human virtue, and least of all the infant virtue of a newly-reformed criminal, can withstand so rude a trial. Accordingly, when the author once asked Mr Brebner, the late governor of the Glasgow bridewell, what proportion of formed criminals he ever knew to have been reformed by prison discipline, he answered that the proportion was easily told, for *he never knew one*. And in the late debate in parliament on this subject, it was stated by the Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, that while the prison discipline at Pentonville promised the most cheering results, it was among those trained there, and *subsequently transported*, that the improvement was visible; for that no such results were observed among those who, after liberation, were allowed to remain in this country.

But while it is thus proved, both by principle and experience, that the moral reformation of offenders cannot be effected by imprisonment, even under the most improved system, in this country, yet, in one respect, a very great amelioration of the prisoner's habits, and extension of his powers, is evidently practicable. It is easy *to teach a prisoner a trade*; and such is the proficiency which is rapidly acquired by the undivided attention to one object in a jail, that one objection which has been stated to the imprisonment system is, that it interferes with the employment of honest industry out of doors. No one can walk through any of the well-regulated prisons in Great Britain without seeing that, whatever else you cannot do, it is easy to teach such a proficiency in trade to the convicts as may render them, if their depraved inclinations can be arrested, useful members of society, and give them the means of earning a livelihood by honest industry. Many of them are exceedingly clever, evince great aptitude for the learning of handicrafts, and exert the utmost diligence in their prosecution. Let no man, however, reckon on their reformation, because they are thus skilful and assiduous: turn them out of prison in this country, and you will soon see them drinking and thieving with increased alacrity, from the length of their previous confinement. It is evidently not intellectual cunning, or manual skill, or vigour in pursuit, which they in general want – it is the power of directing their faculties to proper objects, when at large in this country, which they are entirely without, and which no length of confinement, or amount of moral and religious instruction communicated in prison, is able to confer upon them. Here then is one great truth ascertained, by the only sure guide in such matters —*experience*– that while it is wholly impossible to give prisoners the power of controlling their passions, or abstaining from their evil propensities, when at large, by any amount of prison discipline, it is always not only possible, but easy, to communicate to them such handicraft skill, or power of exercising trades, as may, the moment the wicked dispositions are brought under control, render them useful and even valuable members of society.

Experience equally proves that, though the moral reformation of convicts in this country is so rare as, practically speaking, to be considered as impossible, yet this is very far indeed from being the case when they are removed to a distant land, where all connexion with their old associates is at

once and for ever broken; where an honest career is not only open, but easy, to the most depraved, and a boundless supply of fertile but unappropriated land affords scope for the exercise of the desire of gain on legitimate objects, and affords no facilities for the commission of crime, or the acquisition of property, by the short-hand methods of theft or robbery. Lord Brougham, in a most able work, which is little known only because it runs counter to the prejudices of the age, has well explained the causes of this peculiarity: —

> "The new emigrants, who at various times continued to flock to the extensive country of America, were by no means of the same description with the first settlers. Some of these were the scourings of jails, banished for their crimes; many of them were persons of desperate fortunes, to whom every place was equally uninviting; or men of notoriously abandoned lives, to whom any region was acceptable that offered them a shelter from the vengeance of the law, or the voice of public indignation. But a change of scene will work some improvement upon the most dissolute of characters. It is much to be removed from the scenes with which villany has been constantly associated, and the companions who have rendered it agreeable. It is something to have the leisure of a long voyage, with its awakening terrors, to promote reflection. Besides, to regain once more the privilege of that good name, which every unknown man may claim until he is tried, presents a powerful temptation to reform, and furnishes an opportunity of amendment denied in the scenes of exposure and destruction. If the convicts in the colony of New Holland, though surrounded on the voyage and in the settlement by the companions of their iniquities, have in a great degree been reclaimed by the mere change of scene, what might not be expected from such a change as we are considering? But the honest acquisition of a little property, and its attendant importance, is, beyond any other circumstance, the one most calculated to reform the conduct of a needy and profligate man, by inspiring him with a respect for himself and a feeling of his stake in the community, and by putting a harmless and comfortable life at least within the reach of his exertions. If the property is of a nature to require constant industry, in order to render it of any value; if it calls forth that sort of industry which devotes the labourer to a solitary life in the open air, and repays him not with wealth and luxury, but with subsistence and ease; if, in short, it is property in land, divided into small portions and peopled by few inhabitants, no combination of circumstances can be figured to contribute more directly to the reformation of the new cultivator's character and manners."[5]

In addition to these admirable observations, it may be stated, as another, and perhaps the principal reason why transportation, when conducted on proper principles, is attended with such immediate and beneficial influences on the moral character of the convict, that it places him in situations where scope is afforded for the development of the *domestic and generous affections*. A counterpoise is provided to self. It is the impossibility of providing such a counterpoise within the four walls of a cell – the extreme difficulty of finding it, in any circumstances in which a prisoner can be placed, on his liberation from jail in his own country, which is the chief cause of the total failure of all attempts to work a moral reform on prisoners, when kept at home, by any, even the most approved system of jail discipline. But that which cannot be obtained at home is immediately, on transportation, found in the colonies. The criminal is no longer thrown back on himself in the solitude of a cell – he is not surrounded by thieves and prostitutes, urging him to resume his old habits, on leaving it. The female convict, on arriving in New South Wales, is almost immediately married; ere long the male, if he is industrious and well-behaved, has the means of being so. Regular habits then

[5] Brougham's *Colonial Policy*, i. 61, 62.

come to supplant dissolute – the natural affections spring up in the heart with the creation of the objects on which they are to be exercised. The solitary tenant of a cell – the dissolute frequenter of spirit-cellars and bagnios, acquires *a home*. The affections of the fireside begin to spring up, because a fireside is obtained.

Incalculable is the effect of this change of circumstances on the character of the most depraved. Accordingly it is mentioned by Mr Cunningham, in his very interesting *Account of New South Wales*, that great numbers of young women taken from the streets of London, who have resisted all efforts of Christian zeal and philanthropy in Magdalene Asylums or Penitentiaries at home, and embark for New South Wales in the most shocking state of depravity, become sensibly improved in their manners, and are not unfrequently entirely reformed by forming, during the voyage, *temporary connections with sailors*, to whom, when the choice is once made, they generally remain faithful: so powerful and immediate is the effect of an approach even to a home, and lasting ties, on the female heart.[6] The feelings which offspring produces are never entirely obliterated in the breast of woman. It has been often observed, that though dissolute females generally, when they remain at home, find it impossible to reform their own lives, yet they rarely, if they have the power, fail to bring up their children at a distance from their haunts of iniquity. So powerful is the love of children, and the secret sense of shame at their own vices, in the breasts even of the most depraved of the female sex.

It has been proved, accordingly, by experience, on the very largest scale, not only that the reformation of offenders, when transported to a colony in a distant part of the world, takes place, if they are preserved *in a due proportion of numerical inferiority to the untainted population*, to an extent unparalleled in any other situation; but that, when so regulated, they constitute the *greatest possible addition to the strength, progress, and riches of a colony*. From official papers laid before parliament, before the unhappy crowding of convicts in New South Wales began, and the gang-system was introduced, it appears that between the years 1800 and 1817 – that is, in seventeen years – out of 17,000 convicts transported to New South Wales, no less than *six thousand had, at the close of the period, obtained their freedom from their good conduct, and had earned among them, by their free labour, property to the amount of £1,500,000*! It may be safely affirmed that the history of the world does not afford so astonishing and gratifying an instance of the moral reformation of offenders, or one pointing so clearly to the true system to be pursued regarding them. It will be recollected that this reformation took place when 17,000 convicts were transported in seventeen years – that is, on an average, 1000 a-year only – and when the gang-system was unknown, and the convict on landing at Sidney was immediately assigned to a free colonist, by whom he was forthwith marched up the country into a remote situation, and employed under his master's direction in rural labour or occupations.

And that the colony itself prospers immensely from the forced labour of convicts being added, *in not too great proportions*, to the voluntary labour of freemen, is decisively proved by the astonishing progress which Australia has made during the last fifty years; the degree in which it has distanced all its competitors in which convict labour was unknown; and the marvellous amount of wealth and comfort, so much exceeding upon the whole that known in any other colony, which now exists among its inhabitants. We say upon the whole, because we are well aware that in some parts of Australia, particularly Van Diemen's Land, property has of late years been most seriously depreciated in value – partly from the monetary crisis, which has affected that distant settlement as well as the rest of the empire, and partly from the inordinate number of convicts who have been sent to that one locality, from the vast increase of crime at home, and the cessations of transportation to Sidney; – a number which has greatly exceeded the proper and salutary proportion to freemen, and has been attended with the most disastrous results. But that the introduction of convicts, when not too depraved, and kept in due subordination by being in a *small minority compared to the freemen*, is, so far from being an evil, the greatest possible advantage to a colony, is decisively proved by the parliamentary returns

[6] Cunningham's *New South Wales*, i. 262.

quoted below, showing the comparative progress during a long course of years of Australia, aided by convict labour, and the Cape of Good Hope and Canada, which have not enjoyed that advantage. These returns are decisive. They demonstrate that the progress of the convict colonies, during the last half century, has been three times as rapid as that of those enjoying equal or greater advantages, to whom convicts have not been sent; and that the present state of comforts they enjoy, as measured by the amount per head of British manufactures they consume, is also triple that of any other colony who have been kept entirely clear from the supposed stain, but real advantages, of forced labour.[7]

Accordingly, the ablest and best-informed statistical writers and travellers on the Continent, struck with the safe and expeditious method of getting quit of and reforming its convicts which Great Britain enjoys, from its numerous colonies in every part of the world, and the want of which is so severely felt in the Continental states, are unanimous in considering the possession of such colonies, and consequent power of unlimited transportation, as one of the very greatest social advantages which England enjoys. Hear what one of the most enlightened of those writers, M. Malte-Brun, says on the subject: —

> "England has long been in the habit of disposing of its wicked citizens in a way at once philosophic and politic, by sending them out to cultivate distant colonies. It was thus that the shores of the Delaware and the Potomac were peopled in America. After the American war, they were at a loss where to send the convicts, and the Cape of Good Hope was first thought of; but, on the recommendation of the learned Sir Joseph Banks, New South Wales obtained the preference. The first vessel arrived at Botany Bay on the 20th January 1788, and brought out 760 convicts, and according to a census taken in 1821, exhibited the following results in thirty-three years, viz. —

Free settlers, men, women and children	23,254
Convicts	13,814
	37,068"

In 1832, that population had risen to 40,000 souls.[8] In 1821, there were in the colony 5000 horses, 120,000 horned cattle, and 350,000 sheep. It consumed, at that period, 8,500,000 francs' (£340,000) worth of English manufactures, being about £8, 10s. a-head, and exported to Europe about £100,000 worth in rude produce.

> "Great division of opinion has existed in France, for a long course of years, on the possibility of diminishing the frequency of the punishment of death, as well as that of the galleys; but a serious difficulty has been alleged in the expense with which an establishment such as New South Wales would cost. It is worthy of remark, however, that from 1789 to the end of 1821, England had expended for the transport, maintenance, and other charges of 33,155 convicts, transported to New South Wales, £5,301,023, being *scarce a third* of what the prisoners would have cost in the prisons of Great Britain, without having the satisfaction of having changed into useful citizens those who were the shame and terror of society.
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> "When a vessel with convicts on board arrives in the colony, the men who are not married in it, are permitted to choose a wife among the female convicts. At the expiration of his term of punishment, every convict is at liberty to return to his own country, at his own expense. If he chooses to remain, he obtains a grant of land, and provisions for 18 months: if he is married the allotment is larger, and an adequate portion is allowed for each child. Numbers are provided with the means of

[7] Table showing the annual exports of British manufactures to the undermentioned Colonies, from 1828 to 1846.

[8] It now (1849) exceeds 200,000 souls.

> emigration at the expense of government; they obtain 150 acres of land, seed-corn, and implements of husbandry. It is worthy of remark that, thanks to the vigilance of the authorities, the transported in that colony lose their depraved habits; that the women become well behaved and fruitful; and that the children do not inherit the vices of their parents. These results are sufficient to place the colony of New South Wales *among the most noble philanthropic institutions in the world*. After that, can any one ask the expense of the establishment?" – Malte-Brun, *Géographie Universelle*, xii. 194-196.

But here a fresh difficulty arises. Granting, it will be said, that transportation is so immense a benefit to the mother country, in affording a safe and certain vent for its criminals; and to the colonies, by providing them with so ample a supply of forced labour, what is to be done when they will not receive it? The colonies are all up in arms against transportation; not one can be persuaded, on any terms, to receive these convicts. When a ship with convicts arrives, they begin talking about separation and independence, and reminding us of Bunker's Hill and Saratoga. The Cape shows us with what feelings colonies which have not yet received them view the introduction of criminals; Van Diemen's Land, how well founded their apprehensions are of the consequences of such an invasion of civilised depravity. This difficulty, at first sight, appears not only serious but insurmountable. On a nearer examination, however, it will be found that, however formidable it may appear, it could easily be got over; and that it is entirely owing to the true principles of transportation having been forgotten, and one of the first duties of government neglected by our rulers for the last thirty years.

It is very remarkable, and throws an important light on this question, that this horror at the influx of convicts, which has now become so general in the colonies as to render it almost impossible to find a place where they can with safety be landed, is entirely of *recent* origin. It never was heard of till within the last fifteen or twenty years. Previous to that time, and even much later, transportation was not only regarded by the penal colonies without aversion, but with the utmost possible complacency. They looked to a series of heavy assizes in Great Britain with the same feelings of anxious solicitude, as the working classes do to a good harvest, or the London tradesman to a gay and money-spending season. Spirits never were so high in Sidney, speculation never so rife, property never so valuable, profits never so certain, as when the convict ships arrived well stored with compulsory emigrants. If any one doubts this, let him open the early numbers of the *Colonial Magazine*, and he will find them filled with resolutions of public meetings in New South Wales, recounting the immense advantages the colony had derived from the forced labour of convicts, and most earnestly deprecating any intermission in their introduction. As a specimen, we subjoin a series of resolutions, by the Governor and Council of New South Wales, on a petition agreed to, at a public meeting held in Sidney, on 18th February 1838.

Resolutions of the Legislative Council, New South Wales, 17th July 1838

> 4. *Resolved.*– That, in opinion of this council, the numerous free emigrants of character and capital, including many officers of the army and navy, and East India Company's service, who have settled in this colony, with their families, together with a rising generation of native-born subjects, constitute a body of colonists who, in the exercise of the social and moral relations of life, are not inferior to the inhabitants of any other dependency of the British crown, and are sufficient to impress a character of respectability upon the colony at large.
>
> 5. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, the rapid and increasing advance of this colony, in the short space of fifty years from its first establishment, in rural, commercial, and financial prosperity, proves indisputably the activity, the

enterprise, and industry of the colonists, and is wholly incompatible with the state of society represented to exist here.

6. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, the strong desire manifested by the colonists generally, to obtain moral and religious instruction, and the liberal contributions, which have been made from private funds, towards this most essential object, abundantly testify that the advancement of virtue and religion amongst them is regarded with becoming solicitude.

7. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, if transportation and assignment have hitherto failed to produce all the good effects anticipated by their projectors, such failure may be traced to circumstances, many of which are no longer in existence, whilst others are in rapid progress of amendment. Amongst the most prominent causes of failure may be adduced the absence, at the first establishment of the colony, of adequate religious and moral instruction, and the want of proper means of classification in the several gaols throughout the colony, as well as of a sufficient number of free emigrants, properly qualified to become the assignees of convicts, and to be intrusted with their management and control.

8. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, the great extension which has latterly been afforded of moral and religious instruction, the classification which may in future be made in the numerous gaols now in progress of erection, upon the most approved principles of inspection and separation, the most effectual punishment and classification of offenders in ironed gangs, according to their improved system of management – the numerous free emigrants now eligible as the assignees of convicts, and the accumulated experience of half a century – form a combination of circumstances, which renders the colony better adapted at the present, than at any former period, to carry into effect the praiseworthy intentions of the first founders of the system of transportation and assignment, which had no less for its object reformation of character than a just infliction of punishment.

9. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, no system of penal discipline, or secondary punishment, will be found at once so cheap, so effective, and so reformatory, as that of well-regulated assignment – the good conduct of the convict, and his continuance at labour, being so obviously the interest of the assignee; whilst the partial solitude and privations, incidental to a pastoral or agricultural life in the remote districts of the colony, (which may be made the universal employment of convicts,) by effectually breaking a connexion with companions and habits of vice, is better calculated than any other system to produce moral reformation, when accompanied by adequate religious instruction.

10. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, many men who, previously to their conviction, had been brought up in habits of idleness and vice, have acquired, by means of assignment, not only habits of industry and labour, but the knowledge of a remunerative employment, which, on becoming free, forms a strong inducement to continue in an honest course of life.

11. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, the sudden discontinuance of transportation and assignment, by depriving the colonists of convict labour, must necessarily curtail their means of purchasing crown lands, and, consequently, the supply of funds for the purpose of immigration.

12. *Resolved.*– That, in the opinion of this council, the produce of the labour of convicts, in assignment, is thus one of the principal, though indirect means, of bringing into the colony free persons: it is obvious, therefore, that the continuance

of emigration in any extended form, must necessarily depend upon the continuance of the assignment of convicts.[9]

It is not surprising that they viewed, at this period, the transportation system in this light; for under it they had made advances in population, comfort, and riches, unparalleled in any other age or country of the world.

How, then, has it happened that so great a change has come over the views of the colonists on this subject; and that the system which they formerly regarded, with reason, as the sheet-anchor of their prosperity, is now almost universally looked to with unqualified aversion, as the certain forerunner of their destruction? The answer is easy. It is because transportation, as formerly conducted, *was a blessing*, and because, as conducted of late years, it *has become a curse*, that the change of opinion has arisen in regard to it. The feelings of the colonists, in both cases, were founded on experience – both were, in the circumstances in which they arose, equally well founded, and both were therefore equally entitled to respect and attention. We have only to *restore the circumstances* in which the convicts were a blessing, to revive the times in which their arrival will be regarded as a boon. And to effect this, can easily be shown not only to be attended with no difficulty, but only to require the simultaneous adoption by government of a system of punishment at home, and of voluntary emigration at the public expense abroad, attended with a very trifling expense, and calculated to relieve, beyond any other measure that could by possibility be devised, the existing distress among the labouring classes of Great Britain and Ireland.

To render the introduction of penal labour into a colony an advantage, three things are necessary. 1st, that the convicts sent out should be for the most part instructed in some simple rural art or occupation, of use in the country into which they are to be transplanted. 2d, that they should in general be *beginners in crime*, and a small number of them only hardened in depravity. 3d, what is most important of all, that they should be preserved in a *due proportion*, never exceeding *a fourth or a fifth* to the free and untainted settlers. Under these conditions, their introduction will always prove a blessing, and will be hailed as a boon. If they are neglected, they will prove a curse, and their arrival be regarded as a punishment.

Various circumstances have contributed, of late years, to render the convict system a dreadful evil, instead of, as formerly, a signal benefit to the colonies. But that affords no ground for despair; on the contrary, it furnishes the most well-grounded reason for hope. We are suffering under the effects of an erroneous regimen, not any inherent malady in the patient. Change this treatment, and his health will soon return.

It is well known that the greatest pains have of *late years* been taken, in this country, to instruct prisoners in jail in some useful handicraft; and that, so far has this been carried, that our best-regulated jails are more in fact great houses of industry. The general penitentiary at Pentonville, in particular, where the convicts sentenced to transportation are trained, previous to their removal to the penal settlements, is a perfect model of arrangement and attention in this important respect. But it is equally well known that it is only of *late* years that this signal reform has come into operation; and we have the satisfaction of knowing that already its salutary effects have been evinced, in the most signal manner, with the convicts sent abroad. Previous to the year 1840, scarcely anything was done on any considerable scale, either to teach ordinary prisoners trades in jail, to separate them from each other, or to prepare them, in the public penitentiaries, for the duties in which they were to be engaged, when they arrived at their distant destination. The county jails, now resounding with the clang of ceaseless occupation, pursued by prisoners in their separate cells, then only re-echoed the din of riot and revelling in the day-rooms where the idle prisoners were huddled together, and beguiled the weary hours of their captivity by stories of perpetrated crime, or plans for its renewal the moment they got out of confinement. But the ideas of men are all formed on the experience of facts, or the

[9] *Colonial Magazine*, i. 431, 433.

thoughts driven into them, for a considerable time back. The present universal horror at transportation is founded on the experience of the prisoners with which, for a quarter of a century, New South Wales had been flooded, from the idle day-rooms or profligate hulks of Great Britain. Some years must elapse before the effects of the improved discipline received, and laborious habits acquired, in the jails and penitentiaries of the mother country, produces any general effect on public opinion in its distant colonies.

The relaxation of the severity of our penal code at home, during the last thirty years, however loudly called for by considerations of justice and humanity, has undoubtedly had a most pernicious influence on the *class of convicts* who have, during that period, been sent to the colonies. In so far as that change of system has diminished the frequency of the infliction of the punishment of death, and limited, practically speaking, that dreadful penalty to cases of wilful and inexcusable murder, it must command the assent of every benevolent and well-regulated mind. But, unfortunately, the change has not stopped there. It has descended through every department of our criminal jurisprudence, and come in that way to alter much for the worse *the class of criminals* who of late years have been sent to the penal colonies. The men who were formerly hanged are now for the most part transported; those formerly transported are now imprisoned; and those sent abroad have almost all, on repeated occasions, been previously confined, generally for a very long period. As imprisonment scarcely ever works any reformation on the *moral* character or habits of a prisoner, whatever improved skill in handicraft it may put into his fingers, this change has been attended with most serious and pernicious effect on the character of the convicts sent to the colonies, and gone far to produce the aversion with which they are now everywhere regarded.

It has been often observed, by those practically acquainted with the working of the transportation system in the colonies, that the Irish convicts were generally the best, and the Scotch, beyond all question, the worst who arrived. This peculiarity, so widely different from, in fact precisely the reverse of, what has been observed of the *free* settlers from these respective countries, in every part of the world, has frequently been made the subject of remark, and excited no little surprise. But the reason of it is evident, and, when once stated, perfectly satisfactory. The Scotch law, administered almost entirely by professional men, and on fixed principles, has long been based on the principle of transporting persons only who were deemed irreclaimable in this country. Very few have been sent abroad for half a century, from Scotland, who had not either committed some very grave offence, or been four or five times, often eight or ten times, previously convicted and imprisoned. In Ireland, under the moderate and lenient sway of Irish county justices, a poacher was often transported who had merely been caught with a hare tucked up under his coat. Whatever we may think of the justice of such severe punishments for trivial offences, in the first instance, there can be but one opinion as to its tendency to lead a much better class of convicts from the Emerald Isle, than the opposite system did from the shores of Caledonia. Very probably, also, the system of giving prisoners "repeated opportunities of amendment," as it is called in this country – but which, in fact, would be more aptly styled "renewed opportunities for depravity" – has, from good but mistaken motives, been carried much too far in Scotland. Be this as it may, nothing is more certain than that the substitution of a race of repeatedly convicted and hardened offenders, under the milder system of punishment in Great Britain, during the last twenty years, for one comparatively uninitiated in crime, such as were formerly sent out, has had a most pernicious effect on the character of the convicts received in the colonies, and the sentiments with which their arrival was regarded.

But by far the most powerful cause, which has been in operation for above a quarter of a century, in destroying the beneficial effects of the system of transportation, and substituting the worst possible consequences in their stead, has been the sending out of convicts *in too great a proportion to the free population*, and the consequent necessity for substituting the *gang for the assignment system*. This is a matter of the very highest, indeed of paramount importance; and it may safely be affirmed that, unless a remedy is found for it, all efforts made to render the system of transportation palatable

to the colonies will prove nugatory. Fortunately the means of remedying that evil are not only easy, but, comparatively speaking, cheap, and perfectly efficacious; and they promise, while they remedy the above-mentioned evil, to confer, in other respects, signal benefits both on the colonies and the mother country.

New South Wales was originally selected, and not without sufficient reasons, as the place for the establishment of penal colonies, because the distance of it from the mother country, and the length of the voyage, rendered it a very difficult matter either for runaway convicts, or those who had served their time, to get home again. Once sent out, you were, in the great majority of cases, clear of them for ever. This circumstance was no disadvantage, but rather the reverse, to the colony, and certainly a very great advantage to the parent state, as long as the number of convicts annually sent out was inconsiderable, and the whole convict population formed a small minority to the number of free settlers. When the whole number committed a-year in England was 4500, and in Scotland under 100, as it was in Great Britain in 1804 or 1805, the settlement of convicts on the distant shores of Australia worked well. They were glad to get the 300 or 400 annually sent out; they were benefited by their forced labour; and the free settlers were in sufficient numbers to keep them with ease in subjection, and prevent their habits from contaminating those of the free inhabitants of the colony. But when the commitments from Great Britain and Ireland had risen to 50,000 or 60,000 a-year, and the convicts sent out to 3000 or 4000 annually, as they have done for some years past, the case was entirely altered. The polluted stream became much too large and powerful for the land it was intended to fertilise; it did more harm than good, and became the object of uniform and undisguised aversion.

The *distance* of Australia from the mother country, which formerly had been so great an advantage to both parties, now became the greatest possible evil; because it prevented, at the time this great influx of convicts was going on, the immigration of freemen from preserving anything like a due proportion to it. When the convicts rose to 2000 and 3000 yearly, the free settlers should have been raised to 8000 or 10,000 annually. This would have kept all right; because the tainted population would have been always in a small minority compared to the virtuous; order would have been preserved by the decided majority of the well-disposed; and the assignment system, the parent of so much good, still rendered practicable by the ceaseless extension of free settlers in the wilds of nature. But the distance of Australia rendered this impracticable, when the emigration of freemen was left to its own unaided resources. Steam navigation contributed powerfully to throw it into the back-ground for all but the very highest class of emigrants. The voyage to Australia is one of fourteen thousand miles; it takes from five to six months, must still be performed by sailing vessels, and costs about £16 a-head for the ordinary class of emigrants. That to America is one of three thousand miles; it takes from a fortnight to three weeks, is performed by great numbers of steam as well as sailing vessels, and costs from £3 to £4 a-head for the same class of passengers.[10]

These facts are decisive, and must always continue so, against the choice of Australia, as the place of their destination, by the great bulk of ordinary emigrants. Several young men of good family, indeed, tempted by the high profits generally made there in the wool trade, and the boundless facilities for the multiplication of flocks which its prairies afforded, have settled there, and some have done well. But of ordinary labourers, and persons to do the work of common workmen, there has always been felt a very great deficiency, for this simple reason, that they could not afford the expense of the voyage. The settlers were almost entirely of the better class, and they were in no proportion at all to the number of the convicts. This distinctly appears, not only from the extravagant wages paid to shepherds and common labourers, generally not less than five or six shillings a-day, but from the

[10] While we write these lines, the following advertisement, which appeared in the *Times* of Oct. 10, will illustrate this vital difference: —"Emigration. – The undersigned are prepared to forward intending emigrants to every colony now open for colonisation, at the following rates of passage-money: – To Sydney, £15; Melbourne, £15; Adelaide, £15; Swan River, £20; Van Diemen's Land, £20; New Zealand, £18; Cape of Good Hope, £10; Natal, £10; California, £25; New York, £2, 10s.; Philadelphia, £2, 10s.; New Orleans, £3. – Harrison & Co. —*11 Union Street, Birmingham.*"

very limited number of emigrants, even during the distress of the last three years, when the voluntary emigration had reached two hundred and fifty thousand annually from the British islands, who have gone to our colonies in New South Wales.[11]

This unhappy turn of affairs has been attended with a double disadvantage. In the first place, the vast increase in the number of convicts sent to Sydney, compared with the small number of free settlers, has for a long time past rendered the continuance of the assignment system impossible; and *the gang system*, to take off and embody the surplus numbers, became in a manner a matter of necessity. The manners of the colony, its habits, its prospects, its morality, have been seriously damaged by this change. The emancipated convicts who have made money, known by the name of "canary birds," have pressed upon the heels, and come to excite the jealousy, of the free settlers. The accumulation of convicts in the lower walks of life has checked the immigration of free labour, perpetuated the frightful inequality of the sexes, and led to the most lamentable disorders. The gang system, of necessity introduced, because free settlers did not exist to take the convicts off under the assignment system, perpetuated in the colony the vices of the hulks, the depravity of the galleys. The whole benefits of transportation to the convicts, their whole chances of amendment, are lost, when, instead of being sent to rural labour in the solitude of the woods and the prairies, they are huddled together, in gangs of four or five hundred, without hope to counterbalance evil propensities, or inducement to resist the seduction of mutual bad example. These evils were so sensibly felt, and led to such energetic representations to the government at home, that at length the colony was pacified, but at the same time its progress checked, by an order in council in 1837, that no more convicts, for a limited time, should be sent to Sydney or its dependencies.

But this only shifted the seat of the evil, and augmented its intensity. The convicts, now swelled to above four thousand a-year, could not be kept at home; they required to be sent somewhere, and where was that place to be? Van Diemen's Land was selected, being the most southernly portion of New Holland, and of course the farthest removed from this country; and thither nearly the *whole convicts* of Great Britain and Ireland, soon above thirty-five hundred annually in number, were sent for several years. The consequence of this prodigious influx of criminals into an infant colony, so far removed from the parent state that it cost £20 a-head to send a common labourer there – and of course no free emigration in proportionate numbers could be expected without public aid – might easily have been anticipated. Government did nothing to encourage the simultaneous settlement of free settlers in that distant land, thus flooded with convicts, or so little as amounted to nothing. The consequence was, that, ere long, *three-fifths* of the inhabitants of the colony were convicts. Every one knows, none could have failed to anticipate the consequences. The morals of the settlement, thus having a majority of its inhabitants convicts, were essentially injured. Crimes unutterable were committed; the hideous inequality of the sexes induced its usual and frightful disorders; the police, how severe and vigilant soever, became unable to coerce the rapidly-increasing multitude of criminals; the most daring fled to the woods, where they became bush-rangers; life became insecure; property sank to half its former value. So powerful, and evidently well-founded, were the representations made on the subject to the legislature, that it became evident that a remedy must be applied; and this was done by an order in council in 1844, which suspended entirely for two years the transportation of *male* convicts to the colonies. That of females was still and most properly continued, in the hope that, by doing so, the inequality of the sexes in Australia might in some degree be corrected.

But this measure, like all the rest, not being founded on the right principle, has entirely failed. The accumulation of offenders in the British islands, from the stoppage of the usual vent by which they were formerly carried off, soon became insupportable. The jails were crowded to suffocation; it was ere long found to be necessary to liberate many persons, transported seven years, at the expiration of two, to make way for new inmates. The liberated convicts were soon back in their old haunts,

[11] Emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland to Australia and New Zealand: —— Porter's *Parliamentary Tables*, 1846, p. 236.

and at their old practices; and the great increase of *serious* crimes, such as robberies, burglaries, and murders, demonstrated that the public morals in the great towns were rapidly giving way, under the influence of that worst species of criminals – returned convicts. The judges both of Great Britain and Ireland, in common with every person practically acquainted with the subject, and who had daily proofs, in the discharge of their important official duties, of the total failure of the imprisonment system, were unanimous in recommending a return to transportation. All the temporary expedients adopted, such as Gibraltar, Bermuda, &c., soon failed from the rapid increase of convicts, who greatly exceeded all the means left of taking them off. Government became convinced that they had made a step in the wrong direction; and they most wisely took counsel from experience, and determined to resume the practice of sending convicts abroad. But, on the threshold of the renewed attempt, they were met by the refusal of the colonies to take them. The Cape is almost in rebellion on the subject; and in despair of finding a willing colony, it is said they have in contemplation to send them to be roasted under the White Cliffs, and increase the already redundant population of Malta.

It is not necessary to do any such thing. The solution of the transportation question is easy, the method to be followed perfectly efficacious. Government have only *to commence the discharge* of one of their most important social duties to get rid of all their difficulties, and render the immigration of criminals, as it was in time past, as great a blessing to the colonies, and as ardently desired, as of late years it has been a curse, and earnestly deprecated.

Transportation is a blessing to a colony when the convicts are kept in a minority, perhaps in a fourth or a fifth of the community to which they are sent, and when they are not hardened in crime, and all instructed in some useful trade. In such circumstances, they are the greatest possible addition to its strength, riches, and progress, and will always be gladly received.

Transportation is a curse when the convicts sent out are so numerous, and the free settlers so few, that the former forms a large proportion of the community compared to the latter, and when their habits are those of hardened irreclaimable criminals, instead of youthful novices in crime. If they become a majority, certain ruin may be anticipated to the colony thus flooded with crime.

The difficulties which now beset the transportation question have all arisen from our having pursued a course, of late years, which rendered the settlement of convicts a curse instead of a blessing, as it was at first, when the system was directly the reverse. To render it a blessing again, we have only to restore the circumstances which made it so formerly – sending out the convicts when not completely hardened in depravity, and in such a proportion to the free settlers as to keep them a *small minority* to the free and untainted part of the community. The immigration of convicts to our colonies is like that of the Irish into western Britain: everything depends on the proportion they bear to the remainder of the population. They are very useful if a fourth; they can be borne if they are a third; but let them become a majority, and they will soon land the country in the condition of Skibbereen or Connemara.

We cannot diminish the numbers of convicts transported; on the contrary, woful results have made us aware that it should be materially increased. Experience has taught us, also, that voluntary unaided emigration cannot enable the free settlers in Australia to keep pace with the rapid increase of crime in the British islands. What, then, is to be done? The answer is simple: Discharge in part the vast duty, so long neglected by government, of providing, at the public expense, for the emigration of a certain portion of the *most indigent* part of the community, who cannot get abroad on their own resources, and SETTLE THEM IN THE SAME COLONY WITH THE CONVICTS. Do this, and the labour market is lightened at home; the convicts are kept in a small minority abroad; the colony, thus aided by the combined virtue and penal labour of the mother country, is secured of prosperity and rapid progress; and its rate of increase will soon induce the other colonies to petition for a share of the prolific stream.

At present, there are, or at least should be, above 5000 criminals annually transported from the British islands.[12] The cost of settling a free labourer in Australia is about £16 a-head. To send 16,000 free labourers with these 5000 criminals would cost just £256,000 a-year: call it £300,000 yearly, to make room for the probable increase of criminals, from the growing necessities or depravity of the mother country, and provide for the extra and unavoidable expenses of an infant establishment, and the transportation question is at once solved, a great relief is afforded to the distressed labourers of the parent state, and a certain market for our manufactures provided, which will double every two or three years, as long as the system is continued.

Let government, by an order in council, propose these terms to the colonies, and we shall see if any of them will refuse them. If none will close with them, let them at once establish a new colony on these principles, in some unoccupied part of New Holland. In twelve months, there will be a race for who is to get a share of the fertilising stream. Sixteen thousand free settlers, and five or six thousand convicts, annually sent to any colony, would cause its numbers to double every two, and its prosperity to triple in value every three years. Everything would go on in a geometrical progression. It would soon rival California in progress and reputation. Capital would rapidly follow this scene of activity and progress. Moneyed men are not slow in discovering where labour is plentiful and comparatively cheap, and where their investments are doubled in amount and value every two or three years. A colony thus powerfully supported by the parent state would soon distance all its competitors: while the Cape, New Zealand, and Australia were slumbering on with a population doubling every ten years, from the tardy and feeble support of free emigrants on their own resources, the establishment thus protected would double in two or three. Voluntary emigrants would crowd to the scene of activity, progress, and opulence. The 20,000 persons annually sent out would immediately become consumers of our manufactures to the extent of £150,000 a-year:[13] and this rate would be doubled the very next year! At the end of five or six years, it would amount to £800,000 or £900,000 annually. What a relief at once to the manufacturers of Great Britain, now labouring so severely under the combined effect of foreign competition and a declining home market, and the starving peasantry of Ireland, where half a million of stout labourers – admirable workmen in a foreign country, though wretched ones in their own – are pining in hopeless destitution, a burden upon their parishes, or flocking in ruinous multitudes to Liverpool and Glasgow.

But where is the £300,000 to come from? The Chancellor of the Exchequer has no money; taxation has reached its limits; and loans are out of the question. What! have free trade and a restricted currency, then, so quickly prostrated the resources of the country, that the nation which, in 1813, with eighteen millions of inhabitants, at the close of a twenty years' costly war, raised £72,000,000 by taxation, and £80,000,000 by loan, cannot now, with thirty millions, for so very important an object, after thirty-three years of unbroken peace, muster up £300,000 a-year? A shilling a gallon on the 6,259,000 gallons of whisky annually consumed in *Scotland alone*, in demoralising the community, would provide the requisite sum, and tend to equalise the ruinous exemption which Scotland now enjoys in the manufacture of that attractive and pernicious liquor. A similar duty on the 12,000,000 gallons annually consumed in England, would raise double the sum. But if government, despite the £100,000,000 we were promised by free trade, cannot afford £300,000 a-year for this vital object, let it be laid on the counties as part of the prison or county rates. A little reflection would soon show every person of sense in the country, that its amount could speedily be saved in prison and poor rates.

Simultaneously with this change, an alteration, equally loudly called for, should take place in the administration of our criminal law at home. The present system of inflicting short imprisonments at first, and reserving long imprisonments and transportation for criminals who have plied their trade of pillage for two or three years, should be abolished. Imprisonment should consist of three kinds:

[12] Sentenced to be transported —

[13] At the rate of £7, 14s. a-head – the present rate in Australia.

– 1. A very short imprisonment, perhaps of a week or ten days, for the youngest criminals and a first trifling offence, intended to terrify merely. 2. For a second offence, however trivial – or a first, if considerable, and indicating an association with professional thieves – a long imprisonment of *nine months or a year*, sufficient *to teach every one a trade*, should invariably be inflicted. 3. The criminal who has been thus imprisoned, and taught a trade, should, when next convicted, be *instantly transported*. In this way a triple advantage would be gained. 1. The immense number of prisoners now constantly in confinement in the British islands would be materially lessened, and the prison-rates proportionally relieved. 2. The cost of now maintaining a convict in one of the public penitentiaries, to prepare him for transportation, not less than £17 or £18, would be almost entirely saved; he would be prepared for it, in the great majority of cases, by his previous imprisonment. 3. The character and habits of the convicts sent out would be materially improved, by getting comparatively young and untainted men for penal labour, instead of old offenders, who have learned no other trade than that of thieving. To the country it would undoubtedly save £60 or £80 on each criminal transported, by removing him at the commencement of his career, when his reformation was possible, instead of waiting till its close, when he had lived for three or four years in flash-houses and prisons at the public expense, paid in depredations or prison rates, and acquired nothing but habits which rendered any change of character abroad difficult, if not impossible. The prisons would become, instead of mere receptacles of vice, great houses of industry, where the most dangerous and burdensome part of our population would be trained for a life of industry and utility in the colonies.

For a similar reason, the great object in poor-houses, houses of refuge, hospitals, and other institutions where the destitute poor children are maintained at the public expense, or that of foundations bequeathed by the piety of former times, should be to prepare the young of both sexes, by previous education, for the habits and duties of colonists; and, when they become adults, to *send them abroad at the expense of the public or the institution*. Incalculable would be the blessings which would ensue, both to the public morals and the public expenditure, from the steady adoption of this principle. It is a lamentable fact, well known to all practically acquainted with this subject, that a large proportion of the orphan or destitute boys, educated in this manner at the public expense, in public institutions, become thieves, and nearly all the girls prostitutes. It could not be otherwise with young creatures of both sexes, turned out without a home, relation, or friend, shortly after the age of puberty, into the midst of an old and luxurious community, overloaded with labour, abounding in snares, thickly beset with temptations. Removed to Australia, the Cape, or Canada, they might do well, and would prove as great a blessing in those colonies, where labour is dear, women wanted, and land boundless, as they are a burden here, where labour is cheap, women redundant, and land all occupied. Every shilling laid out in the training the youth of both sexes in such situations, for the duties of colonial life, and sending them to it when adults, would save three in future prison or poor rates. A pauper or criminal, costing the nation £15 or £20 a-year, would be converted into an independent man living on his labour, and consuming £7 or £8 worth yearly of the manufactures of his native country.

The number of emigrants who now annually leave the British shores, is above 250,000![14] No such migration of mankind is on record since the days when the Goths and Vandals overthrew the Roman empire, and settled amidst its ruins. It might naturally have been supposed that so prodigious a removal of persons, most of them in the prime of life, would have contributed in a material degree to lighten the market of labour, and lessen the number of persons who, by idleness or desperation, are thrown into habits of crime. But the result has been just the reverse; and perhaps nothing has contributed so powerfully to increase crime, and augment destitution among the labouring classes of late years, as this very emigration. The reason is evident. It is for the most part *the wrong class which has gone abroad*. It is the employer, not the employed; the holders of little capitals, not the holders of

[14] Viz.: – 1847, 258,000; 1848, 248,000; 1849, understood to be still larger. —*Parliamentary Reports.*

none. Left to its own unaided resources, emigration could be undertaken only by persons possessed of some funds to pay their passage. It took £100 to transport a family to Australia; £20 or £30 to America. The destitute, the insolvent, the helpless, could not get away, and they fell in overwhelming and crushing multitudes on the parish funds, county rates, and charity of the benevolent at home. Labour became everywhere redundant, because so many of the employers of labour had gone away. The grand object for all real lovers of their country now, should be to induce government or the counties to provide means for the emigration, on a large scale, of destitute *labourers*, chained by their poverty to the soil. About 150,000 persons have annually emigrated from Ireland for the last three years, carrying with them above half its agricultural capital; and the consequence is, that in many districts the land is uncultivated, *and the banknotes in circulation, which, in 1846, were £7,500,000, have sunk in August 1849 to £3,833,000*![15] The small cultivators, the employers of the poor, have disappeared, and with them their capital – leaving only to the owners of land a crowd of starving, unemployed labourers, to consume their rents. A million of such starving labourers now oppress the industry of Ireland. Such is the result of agitation at home, and free trade in emigration abroad. The American papers tell us, that each of these starving Irishmen, if strong and healthy, is worth 1000 dollars to the United States. Free-trade emigration can never send them out – it can transport only those who can pay. A large increase of penal emigration, coupled with such a proportionate influx, at the public expense, of free settlers, as would prevent it from becoming an evil, at once solves the transportation question, and is the first step in the right direction in that of Emigration.

[15] See *Dublin University Magazine*, October 1849, p. 372.

MY PENINSULAR MEDAL

BY AN OLD PENINSULAR

PART I. – CHAPTER I

On the evening of the 13th of February last, I was sitting in my library, at my residence in – Square, when a double knock at the door announced the postman. Betty presently entered, bringing, not as I anticipated, a letter or two, but a small packet, which evidently excited her curiosity, as it did mine.

The first thing upon the said packet that caught my eye was a large seal of red wax – the royal arms! – then, above the direction, "On Her Majesty's service!" – just beneath, the word, "Medal!" Yes, the medal that I had earned five-and-thirty years before, in the hard-fought fight on the hill of Toulouse – long expected, it was come at last! And, let me tell you, a very handsome medal, too; well designed, well executed; and accompanied with a very civil letter, from that old soldier, and true soldier's friend, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the military secretary. This letter being, no doubt, precisely the same as hundreds of "Old Peninsulars" have by this time received, I presume I am guilty of no breach of confidence in here transcribing it for the benefit of my readers: —

"Horse-Guards, 31st January 1849.

> "Sir, – I am directed by the Commander-in-Chief to transmit to you the Medal and Clasps graciously awarded to you by her Majesty under the general order of the first of June 1847. I have the honour to be, &c.
> *"Fitzroy Somerset."*

As I never attempt to describe my own feelings, except such as are describable, I shall not relate what I now felt on the receipt of this much desired, anxiously expected medal. But this I will say; – long live the Queen! long live Queen Victoria! God bless her! Oh, it was a kind thought: it was a gracious act. It comes to cheer the heart of many an old soldier, and of many a middle-aged gentleman like myself, who got nothing but honour and aching bones for his share in the Peninsular glories; and now has something that he can add to the archives of his family, and leave to those who come after him. "Graciously awarded to you by her Majesty: " Yes; and I feel it as much so, as if her Majesty's own gracious hands had placed it in mine. And, if ever she wants defenders, so long as this arm can wield – but enough: romance would be out of place.

After the delivery of the medals had been proceeding for some time, I was coming, one morning, out of the Horse-Guards, when I met old Major Snaffle, who had just got his. The major belongs to that class who are known in the army by the name of "grumblers;" and, having been knocked down by the wind of a shot at the Trocadero, having been brought away in the last boat but nineteen from Corunna, having seen the battle of Salamanca from the top of a tree, having been seized with the ague but an hour before the storming of Badajoz, having again been very ill in the south of France from eating unripe grapes, having regularly drawn his pay and allowances, and never having been absent from his regiment on sick leave when he could not get it, now justly deems himself a very ill-used man, because more has not been done for him. "Well, major," said I, "I wish you joy. So you have got your medal at last." "Yes," growled the major, or rather grunted, "at last I *have* got it. Long time, though, six-and-thirty years – long time to wait for half-a-crown."

My own profession, at present, is very different from that of arms. Nor can I presume, having been in but one general action, to rank with those brave old fire-eaters of the Peninsular army, whose medals with *many* clasps – bar above bar – tell of six, seven, eight, critical combats or more, in which they took a part under the illustrious Wellington, in Portugal, in Spain, in the south of France. By the bye, how I should like to see the Duke's own medal! What a lot of bars HE must have! – what a glorious ladder, step rising above step in regular succession, when he sits down to soup in his field-marshal's coat! But I was going to say – to return from great things to small – so far from being able to claim high military honours for myself, though serving under his Grace's orders in the Peninsular war, I was

not there at all in a strictly military capacity. Yet as, from this very circumstance, I had opportunities of seeing scenes, characters, and incidents, connected with the British army, of a different kind from those described by other writers on the subject, I am induced, by the arrival of my medal, to place on record a short narrative of my personal adventures in the Peninsula and south of France.

Yet, ere I commence the yarn, a word, one word, for the honoured dead. Many, who came home safe from the Peninsula, fell at Waterloo. Others were borne from the western ports of Europe across the Atlantic, to be marks for Kentucky riflemen and New England bushfighters. Of the survivors, multitudes upon multitudes have gradually dropped off; and those who now remain, of the legions that conquered at Vimeira, at Vittoria, and at Orthes, to receive her Majesty's gracious gift, are probably fewer in number than those who are gone. One "Old Peninsular" I have heard of, in whose own family and connexions, had all lived, there would have been fourteen or fifteen claimants of the medal. He is now, if he still survives, the only one left. In my own connexions we should have made seven; and now, besides myself, there remains only one venerable uncle, who is comfortably located in a snug berth in Canada. There was my honoured father, who received the thanks of parliament for his services at Corunna, and pounded the French batteries at Cadiz. There was my cousin, Tom Impett, of the 53d, whom I found with a musket-ball in his leg two days after the battle of Toulouse, in a house full of wounded men and officers. He died in Canada. There was another venerable uncle, as kind an uncle as ever breathed, and as honest a man as ever lived. He died, to his honour, far from rich, after having been personally responsible for millions upon millions of public money, the sinews of war, all paid away in hard cash for our Peninsular expenses. He was generally known at headquarters by a comical modification of his two Christian names. There was Captain, afterwards Colonel B – , of the Royal Engineers, a quiet, mild-tempered man, with military ardour glowing in his breast – the man of education and the gentleman. We met near the platform of St Cyprien; and he had the kindness to entertain me with a calm disquisition on the fight, while we were both in the thick of it. He had his share of professional employment in the Peninsular sieges, and got a bad wound or two; but lived to fortify Spike Island, and was at length lost at sea. And then there was colonel H – , who commanded a Portuguese brigade with the rank of brigadier-general – an extraordinary composition of waggery, shrewdness, chivalry, and professional talent. He came down to Lisbon while I was there, on his way to England, quite worn out with hard service and the effect of his wounds, or, as he told us himself, "unripped at every seam." He died not many days after, on his passage to England.

Now for myself. I commenced keeping my terms at Trinity College, Cambridge, in the year 1809, the seventeenth of my age. A college life was not altogether my own choice; for nearly all the males of my family, for three generations, had served or were serving their country either in the army, navy, or marines, to the number of some ten or twelve; and I myself had always looked forward to wearing the king's uniform. Moreover, as the Peninsular war had already commenced when I went to college, and I had learned at school the use of the broadsword and small sword, had been drilled, and could handle a musket, my thoughts often turned to military scenes, especially when I read in the daily journals of victories won, first by Sir Arthur Wellesley, then by Lord Wellington. But, once at Cambridge, I caught the fever of academic emulation. My cousin B – (brother of the Captain B – above mentioned,) had been senior wrangler, and had given me some useful hints as to the mode of reading with effect; I read hard, obtained a Trinity scholarship in my first year, first class the same year, ditto the second year, and stood fair for a place among the wranglers. But now my health broke; not, however, from hard living, but from hard study. I was compelled to give up; and, not choosing to read for a middling degree after having been booked for a high one, determined to go out among the hoys. Now my penchant for military adventure returned with full force. I was miserably out of health, with an excellent constitution – in proof of which I always found that I lost ground by nursing, but gained by a rough open-air life. A campaign or two would be just the thing for me. And I beg to offer this suggestion to growing young gentlemen who are sickly, and consequently hipped, as I was. If, with rough living – that is, with much moving about, and constant exposure to the atmosphere –

you grow worse, I can give you no comfort; you are a poor creature, take all the care of yourself you can. But if, with the same kind of life, you grow better, stronger, stouter, heartier, saucier, depend upon it, you have some stamina. This was my case. I saw that a sedentary life was not the life I was made for; an active life was the life for me; and my thoughts dwelt more and more on the Peninsula. I rubbed up my French, procured a Gil Blas in Spanish, ditto in Portuguese, a Portuguese and a Spanish grammar, and, for a sick man, made wonderful progress in all the three languages.

But, alas! there was a hitch. I was an only son, and an only child – intended for the *law*! My dear father had already made me a present, while at school, of Fortescue *De Laudibus*; and I had already gobbled up a portion of that excellent work – for I was always an omnivorous reader – and had digested it too. And then what would my dear mother say, if I talked to her about going to be shot at for the benefit of my health? It was a delicate point to manage, and how to manage it I knew not.

In the long vacation of 1812, which closed my third year at Trinity College, Cambridge, I brought matters to an explanation. My father's ship, the – , 74, was then in the Downs, and we had lodgings on Walmer beach. I stated my desire to enter the army, and my firm conviction that nothing else would restore my shattered constitution. But my father was inflexible, my mother answered all my arguments, and I saw that I had no chance.

But when one way of gaining an object fails, another sometimes presents itself. My two uncles, of whom I have spoken, were already in the Peninsula, both of them in the same department, the senior at the head of it, with the privilege of occasionally nominating his own clerks. Their friends in England heard from them now and then; and I saw a letter from my senior uncle to a particular old crony of his own, who had influential connexions, asking him why he did not come out to the army with the rank of A. D. P. M. G.,[16] instead of staying at home, and eating roast pig for supper.

Like all the hipped, a miserable race, I was constantly thinking about myself; and now a happy thought struck me. As to parliamentary interest, to be sure I had none. Besides, being under one-and-twenty, I was not of an age to aspire to an officer's rank, in a department of so much responsibility as the paymaster-general's; therefore, the above standing of assistant-deputy, which put an epaulet on the shoulder at once, was not to be thought of. But then, if Buonaparte would only have the kindness to keep us in hot water two or three years longer, I might rise to the said rank by previous good conduct in the office of clerk, and that my uncle could get me at once.

I again broke ground with my honoured parents. My father assured me that, if I went to Lisbon, where he had been stationed with his ship, I should find it a hell upon earth: though I afterwards learned that he had contrived to spend a tolerably happy life there. "And as to your being attached to headquarters, and following the movements of the army, I," said he, "have seen quite enough of service ashore to be able to tell you that you will be soon sick of that." But, to cut the story short, my dear mother now began to incline to my view of the subject. To be sure a clerkship was not exactly what they had thought of for me – but it might lead to something better – no man's education was complete without a tour on the Continent – the usual tour through France, Italy, and the south of Germany, was rendered impossible by the war – and where, in all Europe, could a young man travel, except in Spain and Portugal? Fighting, and paying those who fought, were different things – I might keep out of the way of bullets, and yet contrive to see the world. In short, these arguments prevailed. A letter was written out to my uncle, begging him to write a letter to the head office in London, nominating me as one of his clerks for Peninsular service. I went back to Cambridge, attacked Spanish and Portuguese with renewed ferocity, took my degree of A. B., and returned home in the early part of 1813, just in time to meet a letter from the best of uncles, stating that he had written to the home authorities, and was anxiously expecting my valuable assistance in the Peninsula.

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[16] For the benefit of the uninitiated, assistant-deputy-paymaster-general; A. A. D. P. M. G., acting-assistant-deputy-paymaster-general; a long title, but not so long, by four syllables, as that of the letter-carrier of a certain German war-office – Ober-kriegsversammlungrathsverhandlungpapieraufhebergehülfe.

Nothing was now wanting but the nomination from London. That anxious month! Morning after morning I watched for the postman's knock; and, at every such summons, it was myself that opened the door to him. But great bodies move slowly, and official dignity delights to announce itself by tardiness of action. At length the wished-for communication arrived; a letter, "On His Majesty's Service," of no common magnitude; a seal of correspondent amplitude; and an intimation, in terms of stately brevity, that I was appointed a clerk of the military chest attached to the Peninsular army, and was to attend at the office in London to receive my instructions.

During that month the bustle of preparation, in our usually quiet domicile, had been immense. Stockings sufficient to set up a Cheapside hosier, shirts enough for a voyage to India, flannel commensurate with a visit to the North Pole – everything, in short, that could be thought of, was prepared for the occasion with kind and provident care. I said farewell, reached London, reported myself, got my orders and an advance, booked my place for Falmouth, and found myself the same evening a passenger to Exeter by the fast coach.

In those times, the journey from London to Falmouth by the fast coach was a light off-hand affair of two nights and two days. We reached Exeter on the second night, and there I was allowed the indulgence of three hours' bed, till the Falmouth coach was ready to start. As part of the said three hours was occupied in undressing and dressing, and part also in saying my prayers, I entered the new vehicle far more disposed for sleep than for conversation. But there I found, to my consternation, a very chatty passenger, perfectly *fresh*! He was a man of universal information – in short, a talented individual, and an intellectual character; had his own ideas upon morals, politics, theology, physics, metaphysics, and general literature; was particularly anxious to impart them; and was travelling to obtain orders in the rum and hollands line. Ah, what a night was that! Oh the dismal suffering which a prosy talker inflicts on a weary head! Of all nuisances, the most unconscious is the bore. I do think the Speaker of the House of Commons is the most ill-used man in the three kingdoms. Reflect: he must not only hear – he must *listen*! And then think what a time! – hour after hour, and day after day! For a period amounting, in the aggregate, to no small portion of the life of man, must that unfortunate victim of British institutions sit and hearken to

"Now a louder, now a weaker,
Now a snorter, now a squeaker;
How I pity Mr Speaker!"

Some portion of such suffering I myself was now compelled to endure, by my communicative friend in the Falmouth coach. To be sure, it was only a single proser; but then there was variety in one. He commenced by a few remarks on the weather, by which he introduced a disquisition on meteorology. He then passed, by an easy transition, to the question of secondary punishments; glanced at the theory of gravitation; dwelt for some time on heraldry; touched on hydrostatics; was large on logarithms; then digressed on the American war; proposed emendations of our authorised version; discussed the Neptunian theory; and at length suspended his course, to inform me that I was decidedly the most agreeable fellow-traveller he had ever met with. The fact is, I was sitting up all this time in the corner of the coach, in a state of agony and indignation indescribable, meditating some mode of putting a stop to the annoyance, and mentally seeking a solution to the question – What right has a very stupid person to make your brain a thoroughfare for his stupid ideas, especially when you would particularly like to go to sleep? He mistook my silence for attention, and thought he was appreciated. This went on till daylight – continued to breakfast-time – proceeded during breakfast – ceased not when we had re-entered the coach-talk, talk, talk, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*– still the same stream of stuff. That long, that dreary journey from Exeter to Falmouth! The soft lull of somnolency came at length to my relief; and I began to nod my assent, much to my tormentor's gratification. But presently I was dead asleep; and, most unfortunately, my head dropped forward into the pit of

his stomach. The breath, knocked out of his body, escaped with a gasp, like an Indian's "ugh!" In a moment I was broad awake, and made a thousand apologies, which he politely accepted, and renewed the thread of his discourse. Again, I dropped off; and again my head dropped forward. Another "ugh!" another ocean of apologies, another resumption of the endless yarn. The other passengers, two sedate and remarkably silent gentlemen of Falmouth, in broad-brimmed hats and drab coats of a peculiar cut, had each his weather-eye open, and began to enjoy the joke amazingly. Gradually, once more, the incessant clack subsided in my ears to a pleasing hum; I was off; the cervical, dorsal, and lumbar muscles once more lost their tension beneath the narcotic influence of incessant sound; and my drowsy head gave a pitch as before, with the same results – "ugh!" – apologies unlimited – ditto accepted – and more yarn. The Quakers – I beg their pardon, the "Friends" – are, you must know, eminently humourists. This, please to take notice, arises from their superior intelligence, and high degree of mental culture; the result of which is high susceptibility. You might now have seen, in our two fellow-travellers in the Falmouth coach, what you would see nowhere but in their "connexion" – two men ready to die of laughing, and each looking as grave as a judge. For a few miles it went on. Talk – sleep – head pitched into bread-basket – "ugh!" – pungent and profound regrets – regrets accepted – talk recommenced – and so on with a perpetual *da capo*. At length the most gifted of gratuitous lecturers began to perceive that he was contributing to the amusement of the party in a way that he had not intended, and grew indignant. But I pacified him, as we drove into Falmouth, by politely soliciting a card of his house; stepped out of the coach into the coffee-room of the hotel, out of the coffee-room into bed as soon as it was ready, and made up for two sleepless nights by not coming down to breakfast till two o'clock the next day.

The Lisbon packet was not to sail for a week. My extra baggage arrived in due time by the heavy; and I occupied the interval, as best I could, in a pedestrian survey of the environs of Falmouth, walks to Truro, Pendennis Castle, &c. I was much delighted with clouted cream, and gave the landlady an unlimited order always to let me have a john dory for dinner, when there was one in the market. N.B. – No place like Falmouth for john dories. Clouted cream always ask for, when you go into the West – very good with tea, not bad with coffee; and *mem.*, unimpeachable with apple-pie.

The packet, that was to have the honour of conveying me from Falmouth to Lisbon, was a little tub of a gun-brig, yclept the Princess Wilhelmina. Judging from her entire want of all the qualities requisite for the service on which she was employed, I presume she must have obtained the situation through some member of parliament. Her captain was laid up with the gout; and we were to be commanded by the mate, who turned out to be a Yankee, and an ugly customer; but more of him anon. At the same hotel where I had established my *habitat*, was a military party, three in number, waiting, like myself, for the sailing of the packet; yet not, like myself, men fresh in the service, but all three regular "Peninsulars" – men who had returned on leave from the British army, and were now about to join, in time for the opening of the campaign. They had established themselves in a front drawing-room on the first floor, seemed very fond of music, and had good voices. But as they always sang together, and each sang his own song, it was not easy to determine the vocal powers of each. The coffee-room was quite good enough for me; and there I had the honour of forming the acquaintance of another fellow-voyager that was to be – a partner in a large London house in the Manchester line, whom, to avoid personality, I beg leave to distinguish by the name of Gingham. He had many of the peculiarities of Cockneyism, and some that were entirely his own; but I found him a very pleasant companion, and we perambulated the town and neighbourhood in company.

CHAPTER II

My first chapter brought me, on my way to Portugal, as far as the Royal Hotel, Falmouth. At this stage of my travels, I must beg to detain the reader for a short space; for here it is that I may be said to have had my seasoning; here, in fact, I obtained my first introduction to military society, and to military life, as it prevailed at the British headquarters in the Peninsula. This advantage I gained by falling in with the party of "Peninsulars" already mentioned, who were on their way out, like myself. I must also make my readers better acquainted with my friend Gingham, whom I hope they will not dislike on further knowledge. Gingham and I afterwards campaigned in company. I must premise that he had a touch of romance; and, as I afterwards discovered, had not been brought up as a merchant.

It was the early spring of 1813: a year big with events of import to Spain, to France, to England, and, in fact, to the whole of Europe. On leaving London by the fast coach, we had bowled away over frozen roads. But at Falmouth, the trees were budding in the hedgerows, the sun was shining, the birds were singing; while the soft air stole gently by, and, whispering, sportively saluted us as it passed, like some coy nymph invisible – that idea was Gingham's – the sky was clear, and the haze danced in the sunshine on the distant hills – Gingham again. Towards the afternoon, it generally fell calm. The capacious harbour, smooth as glass, though gently undulating at its entrance, with the swell of the Atlantic that rolled lazily in, bore on its bosom not only the tub-like Princess Wilhelmina and her Yankee mate, but many a noble vessel of ampler tonnage, that showed no water-line in the transparent and silent mirror on which it floated, and seemed to hang suspended between earth and heaven, motionless in the sun-lit and misty ether.

A very odd fish was that Gingham. We enjoyed our walks amazingly. He was going out to Lisbon in a large way, on a mission of mercantile speculation, with full authority from his firm to do anything and everything, whether in the way of contracts for the army, buying up commissariat bills, engaging in monetary transactions, or, above all – for that was his chief object – forming a Peninsular connexion, and opening a new market for British goods. His was, indeed, a voyage of enterprise and of discovery; not, however, his first. His manners were precise. He was a higgler in little things, but had large ideas, and lots of gentlemanly feeling. Like many other Cockneys of those days, he was always dressed, and always conscious of being dressed. His hat was white, with the exception of the interior green of the brim, which matched with his spectacles. His gloves were white, his unmentionables were white, and so was his waistcoat. His white cravat was tied before in a sort of pilot-balloon, or white rosicrucian puff. His hair also was pomatum'd, and powdered white. His very pigtail, all but the narrow silk ribbon that held it together, was white. His coat was not white, but a light pepper-and-salt, approaching to white. On the whole, there was so much white in his general appearance, that on board the packet he at once received the name of "the white man." He was generally well-informed, but particularly so in matters of commerce. Our intimacy increased rapidly, and I afterwards, indeed very soon, found the advantage of it. He was naturally of a communicative disposition, while he had much to communicate that was worth knowing. In me he found a willing hearer; for I was glad to receive any kind of useful information. With the prospect before us of a campaign in common, we soon knocked up a sort of friendship.

Gingham could do the handsome thing. Two days before our embarkation he insisted on my dining with him – taking my chop with him, he called it – in return for half a beefsteak, which he had accepted from me at breakfast, his own being delayed. I entered the coffee-room at the appointed hour; but was ushered up stairs into a private room with some degree of ceremony by the waiter, who, I observed, had on gloves, knees, silk stockings, and pumps.

Gingham was there. He had ordered a regular spread. We sat down. The landlord, who had not hitherto made himself visible, emerged on this festive occasion, brought in the soup, bowed, and retired. Gingham said grace. The soup excellent: it was turtle! "Capital turtle!" said I; "had no idea

that anything half so good was to be had in all Falmouth." "Always take a small stock when I travel," said Gingham; "got a dozen three-quart cases from Cornhill. Just found room for it in my travelling store-closet." "Travelling store-closet!" thought I: "what a capital fellow to campaign with!"

Soup removed. Re-enter landlord, attended by waiter. John dory, in compliment to me, splendid. Large soles, fried. "I despise the man that boils a sole," said Gingham. It was despicable, I admitted. "My dear sir," said he, "allow me to lay down a principle, which you will find useful as long as you live. With *boiled* fish – turbot, for instance, or john dory – always take sauce. You did quite right, in allowing me to help you to sauce just now. But with *fried* fish, at least with fried sole – this, for instance – never, never permit sauce or melted butter to be put upon your plate." It was a manœuvre to get me to try the sole, after the john dory. "Fried sole without butter?" said I. "Try it my way," said Gingham, helping me: "take some salt – that's right – now put to that a modicum of cayenne – there – a little more – don't be afraid of putting enough – cayenne, though hot, is not heating, like common pepper – now mix them well together with the point of your knife." I obeyed implicitly. "Now then," said Gingham, with a look of exultation, "TRY THAT." I tried it; and owned that I had never known, till then, the right way of eating fried sole. It was excellent, even after the john dory. Try it, only try it, the first time a fried sole appears on the dinner table, under which are your legs.

A peculiar sound at the side-table now announced that he of the pumps was opening a bottle of champagne. Up to that moment we had managed to put up with Madeira, which was the fashionable dinner wine in those days. N.B. – Good wine to be got at Falmouth. It comes direct from abroad, not viâ *London*.

Fish removed. Door opens. Though rejoicing in those days in a very fair appetite, I was rather alarmed, after such a commencement of our humble meal, at the thought of what might be coming. But Gingham had a delicacy of taste, which never overdid things. Enter once more the landlord, bearing an elegant little saddle of Dartmoor mutton, and audibly whispering to the waiter, "Boiled fowls and tongue to follow." I commenced this history with a resolution to conceal nothing; therefore, away with reserve: both mutton, fowls, and tongue were excellent. "A little more Madeira, Mr Y – ," said Gingham. The currant jelly had distasted my mouth. I merely put the glass to my lips, and set it down again. Gingham observed, and at once discovered the reason. "Take a mouthful of potato," said Gingham, "the hottest you can find in the dish." My taste was restored. Table cleared again. I hoped the next *entrée* would be the cheese and celery.

During the short armistice, Gingham, who delighted to communicate useful knowledge, resumed the subject of the potato. Like all merchants who pay frequent visits to the Peninsula – and Gingham had been there often – he was knowing in wines, and in everything vinous. "Yes," said he, "nothing like a mouthful of hot potato to make you taste wine. There are lots of things besides, but none equal to that. The invention is my own."

"Then," replied I, "I presume you use it at Oporto and Xeres, when you make purchases?"

"Why, not exactly that neither," said he. "The worst of it is, it makes all wine relish alike, bad as well as good. Now, in buying wine, you want something to distinguish the good wine from the bad. And for this purpose – " The landlord and waiter reappeared.

"Sorry, Mr Y – , there is no game," said Gingham. "Fine jack hare in the larder this morning, but rather late in the season. Wouldn't have it. Can you finish off with one or two light things in the French way?"

"My dear sir, my dear sir!"

The table was this time covered with such a display of *pâtisserie*, macaroni, and made dishes, as would have formed of itself a very handsome *petit souper* for half-a-dozen people. Gingham wanted me to try everything, and set me an example.

The whole concluded, and the cloth about to be removed, "Mr Gingham," said I, "you said grace before dinner, and I think *I* ought to say grace now." The waiter drew up reverently with his back to the sideboard, adjusted his neckcloth, and tightened with his right hand the glove upon his left.

We sat sipping our wine, and nibbling at a very handsome dessert. I wanted to know more about distinguishing good wine from bad.

"I have made large purchases of wine on commission," said Gingham, "for private friends; and that, you know, is a delicate business, and sometimes a thankless one. But I never bought a bad lot yet; and if they found fault with it, I wouldn't let them have it – kept it myself, or sold it for more in the market."

"You were just on the point," said I, "of mentioning a method of distinguishing good wine from bad."

"Well," replied he, "those fellows there, on the other side of the Bay of Biscay, have methods innumerable. After all, taste, judgment, and experience must decide. The Oporto wine-merchants, who know what they are about, use a sort of silver saucer, with its centre bulging upwards. In this saucer they make the wine spin round. My plan is different."

"I should like to know it," said I.

"Well, sir," said he, "mix with water – two-thirds water to one-third wine. Then try it."

"Well?"

"If there is any bad taste in the wine, the mixing brings it out. Did you never notice in London, even if the port or sherry seems passable alone, when you water it the compound is truly horrid, too nauseous to drink?"

"The fact is, though a moderate man, I am not very fond of watering wine."

"The fact is," continued Gingham, "there is very little good wine to be got in London, always excepting such places, for instance, as the Chapter. When you return, after having tasted wine in the wine countries, you will be of my opinion. Much that you get is merely poor wine of the inferior growths, coloured, flavoured, and dressed up with bad brandy for the London market. That sort comes from abroad. And much that you get is not wine at all, but a decoction; a vile decoction, sir; not a drop of wine in its composition. That sort is the London particular." I felt that I was receiving ideas.

"Now, sir," said Gingham, "my cold-water test detects this. If what you get for wine is a decoction, a compound, and nothing but a compound, no wine in it, then the water – about two-thirds to one-third – detects the filthy reality. Add a lump or two of sugar, and you get as beastly a dose of physic as was ever made up in a doctor's shop."

"Just such a dose," I replied, "as I remember getting, now you mention it, as I came down here by the fast coach, at an inn where I asked, by way of a change, for a glass of cold white-wine negus. The slice of lemon was an improvement, having done duty before in a glass of gin punch."

"Shouldn't wonder," said Gingham. "And if what you buy for port or sherry be not absolutely a decoction, but only inferior wine made up, then the water equally acts as a detective. For the dilution has the effect of separating, so to speak, the respective tastes of the component parts – brings them out, sir; and you get each distinct. You get, on the one hand, the taste of the bad brandy, harsh, raw, and empyreumatic: and you get, on the other hand, the taste of the poor, paltry wine, wretched stuff, the true *vinho ordinario* flavour, that makes you think at once of some dirty roadside Portuguese *posada*, swarming with fleas."

"But what if you water really good wine?"

"Why, then," said Gingham, "the flavour, though diluted, is still the flavour of good wine."

"I should like," said I, "to be knowing in wines."

Seeing in me a willing learner, he was about to open. But at this moment the mail drove into the yard of the hotel; and, knowing that Gingham was always ravenous for the London journals on their first arrival, I insisted on our going down into the public room, taking a cup of coffee, and reading the papers. We had talked about wines; but, being neither of us topers, had taken only a moderate *quantum suff.*, though all of the best kind. Gingham, out of compliment to me, wished to prolong the sitting. But, knowing his penchant for a wet newspaper, I was inflexible. We rose from the table.

I felt that I had been handsomely entertained, and that something handsome ought to be said. The pleasing consciousness, however, of having eaten a good dinner, though it excited my finest feelings, did not confer the faculty of expressing them. I began:

"Sir, Mr Gingham; I feel we ought not to leave this room, till I have expressed the emotions – " Then, taking a new departure, "Really, sir, your kind hospitality to a comparative stranger – "

"Well, sir," said Gingham, laughing, "I will tell you how it was. Do you remember your first breakfast in the coffee-room, the day after your arrival by the mail? I was present, and enjoyed it amazingly."

"Oh, sir! oh, sir!" said I, a *leetle* taken aback; "really I was enormously hungry. In fact I had eaten nothing during my two days' previous journey; and was so sleepy on my arrival, that I got to bed as fast as I could, without thinking of ordering supper. And when I came down next morning, or rather afternoon, why, to tell you the truth, I made it breakfast and dinner in one; and perhaps I did seem a little savage in my first onset on the Falmouth – "

"No, NO, NO!" exclaimed Gingham, interrupting me. "That was not it. No, NO, NO! far from it. My dear sir, you merely disposed of two or three plates of ham and eggs; then a few muffins, with about half-a-dozen basins of tea. After that – let me see – after that, to the best of my recollection – after that, you took nothing, no, nothing, but the mutton chops. No, sir, it was not the quantity. I have often made as hearty a meal myself; and, if we campaign together, I trust we shall often make as hearty a meal together. Nothing like campaigning for an appetite. No, sir; that was not it. It was your manner of taking it."

"My manner of taking it? Really! And pray what did you see in my manner of taking it?"

"Sir," said Gingham, with emotion, "I know this house. I have long used this house. Everything in this house is good. The accommodation is good. The attendance is good. The wine is good. The dinners are good. The breakfasts are good. Now, sir, I have seen some persons conduct themselves in this house in a manner that filled me with scorn, disgust, and indignation. They arrive by the London mail, sir, as you did, and go to bed. In the morning they come down into the public room, and order breakfast. They breakfast, not like you, my dear sir, very moderately, but enormously. That I could forgive; after a long journey it is excusable. But, sir, what I cannot tolerate is this: They find fault with everything. The tea is bad; the coffee is bad. They take up the silver cream-jug; examine the clouted cream; smell to it – yes, sir; they actually smell to it – and smelling to anything, I need not say, is as great a *bêtise* as a man can commit at table – ask the waiter what he means by bringing them such stuff as that; and, before they have done, gobble up the whole, and perhaps call for more."

"Call for more? Why, that, I think, is exactly what I did."

"Yes, my dear sir," said Gingham, "you enjoyed it; and you took a pretty good lot of it; but you did not find fault with it. Not so the people I am talking of. The fact is, sir, we Londoners have a great idea of keeping up our dignity. These persons wish to pass for people of importance; and they think importance is announced by finding fault. Item, they are enormously, indecently hungry, and fully intend to make a breakfast for two, but wish to do it surreptitiously. On the arrival of the beefsteak, they turn round the dish, and look at it contemptuously, longing, all the while, to fall to. Yes, sir, they turn round the dish two or three times; then stick their fork into the steak, and turn it over and over; perhaps hold it up, suspended by a single prong, and examine it critically; and end all by pushing away their plate, drawing the dish into its place, and bolting the whole beefsteak, without taking time to masticate. Sir, there was a man in that coffee-room this morning, who grumbled at everything, and ate like a dog. In short, they clear the table of eatables and drinkables; then call the waiter, and reproach him, with a savage look, for bringing them a tough beefsteak; and, in a plaintive voice, like ill-used men, inquire if there is any cold meat-pie."

I owned, from personal observation in the public room, to the general correctness of this sketch.

"Now you, sir," continued Gingham, "enjoyed your breakfast, and made a good one; but found fault with nothing; because, I presume, there was nothing to find fault with. I like to see a man enjoy

his meals. And if he does, I like to see him show it. It is one of the tokens by which I judge of character. Your conduct, my dear sir, commanded my respect. Shall I say more? It won my esteem. Then and there my resolution was formed, to invite you, at the first convenient opportunity, to partake of my humble hospitality."

It was too much. I extended my fist. A shaking of hands, of some continuance – cordial on my part, and evidently so on Gingham's, by the pain I felt in my shoulder.

"Well, sir," said Gingham, "I had already learned that you were a passenger for the Peninsula. I was a passenger for the Peninsula; and, as we were to sail together, and probably to campaign together, I resolved to introduce myself. I said, this lad – I beg your pardon, this youth – excuse me, this gentleman, this young gentleman – for I guess you have some ten years the advantage of me in that respect – this gentleman is, like myself, bound for the headquarters of the Peninsular army. I know something of campaigning; he knows nothing. We campaign together."

"Well now," said I, "that is just what I should like amazingly."

Gingham now took the initiative, and put forth his paw. Again we tackled, and, in the true pump-handle style, so dear to Englishmen, expressed mutual cordiality: only that this time, being better prepared, I reversed the electric stream, and brought tears into Gingham's eyes. He sung out, "Oh!" and rubbed his arm.

"The rest," said Gingham, "is easily told. After breakfast you walked out into the court-yard, lit a cigar, and stood on the steps. I lit another, followed, and had the pleasure of making your acquaintance."

I gave audible expression to my profound self-congratulations.

"Allow me, however, to add," said Gingham, "you raised yourself greatly in my esteem by asking the waiter for a red herring. The request evinced a superiority to vulgar prejudices. Your way of putting it, too, was in perfect good keeping: for you did not commit yourself by *ordering* a red herring; but asked whether you could have one in the coffee-room. Believe me, I was pained, when he stated that red herrings were not permitted; and could but admire your self-denial, in accepting, as a substitute, the mutton-chops."

We adjourned to the public room.

Gingham had entertained me hospitably and handsomely. Yet this was the same Gingham who, when I made him take part of my beefsteak at breakfast, because his own was delayed, proposed that we should desire the waiter to tell the landlady to charge only half a beefsteak to me, and half a beefsteak to him, Gingham. My rejection of this proposal was the immediate occasion of the dinner, at which the reader has just been present.

While we were eviscerating the papers, fresh from London, Gingham leaned over the table, with the air of a man who had something important to communicate. He looked me earnestly in the face.

"Mr Y – ," said he, "what do you say – to a red herring – this evening – for supper?"

"Thank you. You must excuse me. Nothing more to-night, but one cup of coffee, and perhaps a cigar. Not even an anchovy toast. I really couldn't."

"Well, then," said Gingham, "to-morrow at breakfast. We will engage a room up stairs, and ask leave of nobody. I have brought down a small barrel from London – always take some when I visit the Peninsula – get them in Lower Thames Street. You will pronounce them excellent."

The offer was too good to be declined.

Next morning we ordered breakfast up stairs. Indeed, a fire had been lit in one of the parlours, by Gingham's directions; and there I found him, with the table laid, and the herrings ready for cooking. Gingham had secured a small Dutch oven; not with the design of *baking* the herrings – no, no, he knew better than that – but to keep them hot when done. The doing he reserved to himself, on the plea of experience. I was not to assist, except in eating them.

"Do you understand cookery, Mr Y – ?" said Gingham.

I ingenuously owned my deficiency in that branch of education, which is no part of the Cambridge curriculum.

"Three months at headquarters," said he, "will make you an excellent cook."

It so happened that the parlour, in which we had located ourselves for the purpose of cooking our herrings, was not that in which we had dined the day before, but one adjoining the larger apartment occupied by the three military gentlemen, with whom we were to cross the Bay of Biscay. A boarding, removable at pleasure, was the only separation between the two rooms. We had not yet become acquainted.

Shortly after I joined Gingham, two of the three entered their parlour; presently the third followed. They rang the bell, and ordered breakfast, all in high good humour, and talking incessantly. We were not listeners, but could not help hearing every word that was said.

"Good blow-out that, yesterday." – "Pity we didn't know of it sooner; might as well have dined with them." – "Turtle, too." – "'Pon your honour?" – "Turtle, and lots of champagne. Caught the waiter swigging off the end of a bottle in the passage." – "Who are they?" – "Don't know; can't make them out. Both going out with us in the packet, though." – "Think I remember seeing the white fellow at Cadiz; almost sure I did; and afterwards again at Madrid. Always wore his hair in that way, well floured and larded, except when it was too hot, and combed down straight on each side of his ugly face." – "What a nose! Prodigious! A regular proboscis." – "Yes, and all on one side, like the rudder of a barge." – "Let me tell you, a very good thing; for if it was straight, it would be always in his way." – "Always in his way? Why it would trip him up when he walked." —*Omnes*, "Ha, ha, ha." – "Going with us, do you say? Hope he don't snore. Why, such a *tromba* as that would keep a whole line-of-battle ship awake." – "Bet you a dollar he's blind of one eye." – "Done." "Done. Book it, major." – "I'll trouble you for a dollar. He does walk a little sideways, but it isn't his eye." – "What is it, then? One-eyed people always walk sideways." – "Why, I'll tell you, now. It's a principle which most people observe through life." – "What principle?" – "Guess." – "Come, tell us, old fellow. None of your nonsense." – "D'ye give it up?" – "Yes, I give it up. Come, tell us." – "Follow your nose." —*Omnes*, "Ha, ha, ha." – "Capital! capital! That's the best we've had for some time. Follow your nose! Capital! Ha, ha, ha." – "Well, that's it, depend upon it. Other people follow their noses by walking straight forward. That white fellow walks sideways, but still follows his nose." – "No, no, major. Your theory is fallacious. When he walks his nose points backwards. His nose points over his left shoulder, and he walks right shoulders forward." I looked at Gingham, and laughed. Gingham was looking rather grave, and feeling his nose. "No, no. I tell you he walks *left* shoulders forward." – "Bet you a dollar." – "Done." – "Done. Book it, major." – "I'll trouble you for a dollar. Saw him this morning, all in a bustle. Took particular notice of his nose." – "Who is the young chap?" – "Oh, he's a regular Johnny Newcome, that's evident." – "Johnny Newcome? Yes; but I wish he wasn't such a chap for john dories. Price in the market is doubled." Gingham laughed and looked at me. "Suppose he's a sub going out to join his regiment." – "No, no. Got such lots of baggage. No regimental officer would be ass enough to take such a heap of trunks. Load for three mules." – "He'll soon knock up. Those long fellows always knock up." – "Shouldn't wonder if he gets the fever next autumn. Then what will his mammy say?" – "Well, but what did they dine about? Thousand pities we did not join them." – "Oh, I suppose it was something of a parting feed; taking leave of Old England, you know: toasting Miss Ann Chovy, Miss Mary Gold, Miss Polly Anthus, and all that kind of thing." – "Hang it all; a good dinner for eight people; thousand pities we missed it."

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