

acres, he pays rent in reality for twenty acres quite useless to him, for though he might not suffer the twenty acres to be wholly uncultivated or idle, yet the whole of his farm, the one hundred acres, would be inefficiently managed by the labour required for eighty. It is clear, then, that the farmer so circumstanced, would make more by the eighty, than by the one hundred acres. The same reasoning applies to all farms, large or small; and no safer rule than that of capital or labour equal to, and neither more nor less than equal to, the farms, can be followed. But the great practical use to be made hereof is proved in evidence by the allotment system in this country, (now extended to nearly, if not quite, 100,000 tenants,) for that the average increase by these cottagers' labour alone is an addition of 2s. 6d. to their weekly wages. This is of their own earning. Their rents are well paid, and their produce to pay them, by spade husbandry, generally double, sometimes treble, and in many cases quadruple, that of the larger farmer. Thus this principle will apply, and may be carried out, as well in a colony as at home—the benefit is equal, and the labour probably less. Still there is a directing hand needed in the first mode of locating colonists, so that the greatest good shall be secured, and the greatest inconveniences averted.

On this point I refer to the text with confidence; but in a new country and climate, much, no doubt, must ever be left to the good sense and practical experience of the settlers. Here again, however, the principles of the common law apply in happy accordance with those of cultivation. They mutually support and improve each other, and lead necessarily to the greatest degree of peace, and comfort, and happiness, our nature is capable of enjoying. Advancing in this combined and harmonious course, who loses? No one. Advancing on this impregnable foundation, who gains? Every one. Is it possible to imagine a failure even in a less fertile season? No; for even then all the evils attendant thereon would be diminished, all the benefits of industry and providence increased. Such are the certain results and advantages attending this system in the mother country. Carrying out the same principles and almost the same practice, how can it be otherwise than equally favourable to the colony?

Assuming that such principles are acted upon by a population derived from the parent state, not of convicts, not of doubtful or desperate characters, not of vagabonds, but of selected, honest and industrious individuals, whose habits are all formed, some to one mechanical or agricultural pursuit, some to another, but all leagued together in pursuit of one common object, the improvement of the country, and consequently of their own condition in it, what can be more gratifying to the philanthropist? All labouring for the common good, by pursuing each his own separate interest in the value of that labour, without which, as we have seen, nothing can be secured for either profit or convenience,—all united on the congregational principles, so clearly established and set forth in the text,—what can be predicted of such a society, increasing, as it may, in numbers, either by birth or immigration—what, but a state as enviable, as happy, contented, and flourishing, as the imagination can conceive? The whole machinery of the least complex, and most simple, but efficient character, and never varying, or in any degree diverging from that solemn march of improvement, that seems in truth a heaven upon earth. The structure of such a society is founded on adamant: the floods may come, the rains descend, and the winds blow; it cannot be shaken, it cannot fall. Now, with such a colony so securely based, let us see what benefit it necessarily reflects back on the mother country, whence so many of her mechanical and manufacturing supplies must long continue to be drawn. What the colony requires in these respects she amply repays by her increased produce, her increased and increasing resources of all kinds, all accumulating for the mutual benefit of each country. A constant progression of benefits—the ties of kindred, of origin, and religion, more closely drawn together, and the improvements of each more directly and speedily imparted to the other. This is really no theory, no pleasing dream of anticipated blessings which cannot be realized, no impracticable scheme not suited to the state of the colony in its commencement, its progress, its perfect assimilation to the parent state. The principles have all been tried, they have never failed, they never can fail, when practised in that beautiful simplicity and order already shewn; and founded as they are on that highest ground of all establishments of human beings, the Divine will and promises, as contained in the Bible.

The views entertained by the excellent author in regard to colonial settlers are, no doubt, sound and sensible, as are all the others on the main subject of his book. Time and circumstances, however, may require some little deviation, in particular localities, from the exact plan he suggests, yet still in strict accordance with his principles and the general scope of his arguments.

Should I, in thus endeavouring to rescue from that oblivion such excellent materials were falling into, succeed in making them acceptable to the general reader; should my humble endeavour, as editor, be successful in bringing them again into circulation; should the public feel with me that the time is propitious for it, and that now, when wandering notions on all subjects affecting the social system are abroad, and the Schoolmaster too, who sometimes leads and sometimes follows them: if I shall recal attention to the sure foundations on which society rests, and bring back the mind to the great leading and never to be forgotten principles of our constitution, it will be indeed a great reward for my labours—a grateful return, and most gratefully received.

A MEMORANDUM ON A PROPOSAL FOR A NEW SETTLEMENT TO BE MADE ON THE COAST OF AFRICA;

Recommending to the Author of that Proposal several Alterations in his Plan, and more especially the adoption of the ancient mode of Government by Tithings (or Decenaries) and Hundreds, as being the most useful and effectual mode of Government for all Nations and Countries.

The proposal for a settlement on the coast of Africa will deserve all encouragement, if the settlers are absolutely prohibited from holding any kind of property in the persons of men, as slaves, and from selling either man, woman, or child. Even to claim any human person as a slave ought to be considered as an affront to the whole community, and be punished accordingly.

Rules must also be laid down to prevent the monopoly of land within the bounds of the settlement: and a sufficient reserve of land must be made for public services (schools and religious instruction) in each township; and for cottage land, to be distributed in small parcels to new settlers and redeemed captives; which parcels must revert to the state or community, for the same benevolent investiture to others of the like condition, as soon as the temporary possessors are enabled to purchase larger lots; for it will prevent, in some degree, the monopoly of land, if the cottage lots are untenable with other land. Common land should also be reserved for a competent distance round each town and village, wherein all inhabitants, rich and poor, should have an equal personal right: because the claims of rich landholders, when made in proportion to the size of their bordering estates, are unreasonable and unjust; and have occasioned a cruel perversion of the utility of common lands in England: for the live stocks of rich farmers, occasionally turned loose upon the commons, generally deprived the cattle of the poor inhabitants of their necessary sustenance; and the late divisions for enclosures, by Act of Parliament, having been, for the most part, inconsiderately granted in the same unjust proportions, *have at length nearly annihilated the common lands of England:** whereas on the contrary, the large possessions of the neighbouring landholders ought, in reason and natural justice, rather to have excluded them from the least share in the inheritance of the poor inhabitants; or, at most, their share should have been merely personal, as men, and individuals, equal to, but not exceeding, the claims of their neighbours, that the common lands might be truly in common.

The managers, entrusted with the Society's property to form the settlement, should have no settled dominion or authority over the people as governors or judges, but should be contented with that superiority and influence, which their pecuniary trust, as agents and overseers for the Society, will naturally afford them.

The officers for internal government, as the governor or mayor, the sheriffs, and other Magistrates, constables, &c., &c., should be freely elected every year by all the inhabitants; due qualifications being premised to render men eligible to offices of dignity and trust.

The purposes of the defence, legislation, public justice, government, and subordination of the settlers, and their union as a community, (however large and extensive the settlements may hereafter become,) are points more easily to be accomplished than is generally conceived; provided the ancient Anglo-Saxon government by mutual Frankpledge in tithings (or decenaries) and hundreds be duly adopted; and this being already consistent with the common law and ancient Constitution of this Kingdom, (still deemed legal though not in use,) might be lawfully established, even if the settlement is made within the boundaries of the present English claims; but, in that case, the legal process in all the courts of justice must be carried on in the King's name.

But, if the settlements be attempted in any other part of Africa, not claimed by European Powers, the managers must first obtain the consent (and association, if possible) of the native inhabitants, or else the establishment must be made on an uninhabited part of the coast; and as the majority of the settlers will probably be negroes, returned from slavery and oppression to their native soil, there will be no necessity to form the plan of government strictly by the constitutional model of England, any farther than reason and experience may suggest the adoption of some particular parts of it; but we may, in that case, assume the liberty of drawing a precedent for government from more ancient and more perfect documents than our Saxon records, viz., from the example, or rather the original intention, of the Israelitish commonwealth, purified and improved by the general precepts and maxims of the Gospel, and by the example of free congregational government amongst the primitive Christians, who decided their own temporal litigations and differences, ("things pertaining to this life," 1 Cor. vi. 1—8,) as well as ecclesiastical questions, in their regular assemblies of all the people; which method was an ancient ethnic custom, (derived probably from patriarchal times,) as appears by the example of the pagan Ephesians, recorded in Acts, xix. 38, 39, whom their town clerk referred to a lawful assembly (apparently distinct, as the context proves, from their ordinary courts of justice, then subject to the Romans) for the examination and resolution of all extraordinary questions.

The Israelitish government, under the theocracy, was administered by freely elected judges and officers throughout all the tribes and cities, or gates, except in the extraordinary cases of prophetic judges, though these were probably elected likewise, as soon as their superior or supernatural abilities became generally known.

* This was written in 1783. And during the French Revolutionary War common lands were enclosed to the value of sixty millions, and 30,000 cottages pulled down.