

taxes, and to administer its affairs according to the form and on the model of the English constitution. It so happened that this became, not long after, matter of question in the King's Council. In the early part of the reign of James II. a question was raised in relation to the colony of Barbadoes, and, in fact, affecting all the British colonies. Mr. Fox, in relation to that subject, writes :

"Among the various objections to that nobleman's (Marquis of Halifax) political principles, we find the charge most relied upon for the purpose of injuring him in the mind of the King was founded on the opinion he had delivered in Council, in favour of modelling the charters of the British colonies in North America upon the principles of the rights and privileges of Englishmen. There was no room to doubt (he was accused of saying) that the same laws under which we live in England should be established in a country composed of Englishmen. He even dilated upon this, and omitted none of the reasons by which it can be proved, that an absolute Government is neither so happy nor so safe as that which is tempered by laws, and which limits the authority of the Prince. He exaggerated, it was said, the mischiefs of a sovereign power, and declared plainly that he could not make up his mind to live under a king who should have it in his power to take, when he pleased, the money he might have in his pocket."

Now I consider it to be a very remarkable case, that we find the noblemen who had advised Charles II. to dispense with his Parliament, whose knowledge and ability had been most useful to that Monarch, so thoroughly imbued with the principle that Englishmen, everywhere else, ought to live free as Englishmen at home : that in the King's council, when the question was submitted to him whether the population of an English colony were to be adjudged to live under the arbitrary rule of the Sovereign, or under free institutions, he declared forcibly, and unhesitatingly in favour of freedom. (Hear, hear.) That this opinion was in conformity with the general constitution of these colonies, that it was in conformity with the general principles of English law, is, I think, proved by the opinion of Sir Phillip Yorke, and the other law-officers of the Crown, when he was Attorney General, which was quoted by Lord Mansfield in the well-known case of the Jamaica proclamation. The Assembly of Jamaica, having entered upon a dispute in relation to the $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. duties, it was referred to Sir P. Yorke to know "what could be done if the Assembly should obstinately continue to withhold all the usual supplies?" They reported that if Jamaica was still to be considered as a conquered island, the King had a right to levy taxes upon the inhabitants, but if it was to be considered in the same light as the other colonies, no tax could be imposed on the inhabitants, but by an Assembly of the island, or by an act of Parliament. I think that opinion is quite sufficient with respect to the general law on the subject. (Hear, hear.) In the case of the island of Grenada, that island having been ceded to us by the peace of Paris of 1763, the King issued a proclamation by which he gave a council and an assembly to the island, with power and direction to the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Council and the representatives of the people, to make, constitute, and ordain laws, statutes, and ordinances for the good government thereof, and to levy such taxes as to the same might seem fit. It afterwards became a question whether the King had a right to tax the people of the island a certain amount to be paid to the Crown, and Lord Mansfield then declared, that whatever might have been the power of the Crown at the time of the acquisition, the proclamation which granted to the colonists the rights and privileges exercised under the British constitution, placed it out of the power of the Crown afterwards to make any arbitrary assessment. (Hear, hear.) What has been the policy since that period? For various reasons, some of which I can imagine, but which I will not now presume to conjecture, from the peace of 1763 to the peace which followed in 1814-1815, though there were some acquisitions which appeared at that time to be in a similar position with the islands to which I have referred, it does not seem to have been thought desirable to imitate the policy which had been formerly pursued, and therefore in these acquisitions, whether under capitulation, or by an order of council, the old Spanish or Dutch institutions, or whatever they might be, were for the most part retained, and the Government of the various acquisitions was not formed on the model of the English constitution. With reference to commercial relations and administration, there have lately been very great changes adopted deliberately by the Government of this country, or rather have been going on for many years past, in our commercial policy towards our colonies. In 1786, Mr. Pitt seems to have had for a time the belief that the relations between our West India colonies and the North American States, now become the United States of America, could be carried on much as they had been when the latter were under the dominion of Great Britain, but this idea did not continue to obtain; for, after an attempt to establish the seats of a strict monopoly at New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, with a view to the supply of the West India Islands, which created a long contest with the United States, measures of a far more liberal character were introduced and carried into effect by Mr. Huskisson with reference to the commerce of our West India colonies.

Lately we have gone very much further in this direction. By the repeal last year of the navigation Laws, I conceive we have entirely put an end to the whole system of commercial monopoly in our Colonies. (Hear, hear.) We have plainly declared that, on the one hand, if we require productions similar to those which our Colonies produce, we shall be ready to take them from other parts of the

world; and on the other hand, we have left the Colonies free to provide themselves with the products of other countries than our own, and to impose upon the manufactures of Great Britain equal duties with those imposed on foreign manufactures. It is not my purpose to go into the question whether this new policy is a right or a wrong policy. This however is evident, that while on the one hand it has produced much surprise, and in particular cases discontent, in some of our colonial possessions, on the other hand it has led at home to questions as to how the colonies are to be in future managed, and to a question, in some quarters, whether it is desirable to retain our colonial empire at all. I state this latter proposition broadly, though there are various modifications of it in various minds. Before we enter upon that point it is expedient to examine what has been the increase in several of these colonies, both in population and in wealth under our dominion. I will first take the increase of population, within a very short period, since the peace of 1815, in British North America. The population of British North America in 1816, was 462,250; in 1835, 1,099,904; in 1847, 1,866,891. This account comprises Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and I am satisfied that at the present moment the populations of those regions is not less than 2,000,000. (Hear, hear.) The population in Lower Canada in 1784, was 113,000; in 1825, 423,630, being an increase in 41 years, of 310,630; in 1831, 511,922, increase in 6 years, 88,292, or 17 per cent.; in 1844, 690,782, increase in 13 years, 178,860, or 35 per cent.; in 1848, 770,000, increase in 4 years, 79,218, or 12 per cent. The population of Upper Canada in 1811, was 77,000; in 1825, 158,027, increase in 14 years, 81,027, or 105 per cent.; in 1831, 234,681, increase in 6 years, 76,654, or 42 per cent.; in 1842, 486,055, increase in 10 years, 224,995, or 45 per cent.; in 1848, 723,292, increase in 6 years, 237,237, or 33 per cent. The population of Upper and Lower Canada in 1825, was 581,657; in 1831, 746,603, increase in 6 years, 164,603, or 29 per cent.; in 1842 and 1844, 1,176,837, increase in 10 years, 403,855, or 55 per cent.; in 1848, 1,493,292, increase in 4 years, 316,455, or 28 per cent. (Hear, hear.) This is the increase in Upper and Lower Canada, and its character may be more adequately appreciated by a comparison with the increase in the population of the United States, which I will give you at the decennial periods in which the regular census there is taken. The population of the United States in 1790, was 3,929,827; in 1800, 5,305,925, decennial increase, 35.01; in 1810, 7,239,814, increase, 36.45; in 1820, 9,654,596, increase, 33.35; in 1830, 12,866,020, 33.26; and in 1840, 17,069,453, increase, 32.67. As to the imports and exports of Canada in the last few years, the results are not less remarkable. The imports in 1835 amounted to £2,730,082; in 1846, £4,052,378. The exports in 1835 amounted to £1,929,605; in 1846, £3,201,992. The shipping entered inwards in 1835, 1,077,874 tons; in 1847, 1,461,295. That outwards in 1835, 1,025,527 tons; in 1847, 1,494,634 tons. This, at all events, shows a most remarkable increase both in population and in wealth; and if we go to another test of wealth, the assessment for local taxation in Upper Canada, the result is no less remarkable. This has been the annual amount and value of all articles assessed for local taxation in Upper Canada, under the several assessment laws of that portion of the Province. In 1825, £2,256,874; in 1830, £2,929,269, increase in 5 years, £672,395; 1835, £3,880,994, increase, £951,725; 1840, £5,607,426, increase, £1,726,432; 1845, £7,778,917, increase, £2,171,491; 1847, £8,567,001, in two years, £788,084. (Hear, hear.)

With respect to another portion of our colonies in which there has been an increase of population of British descent, the facts are scarcely less remarkable. I look now more especially to our Australian colonies; and, in the first place, to New South Wales. In 1828 the population was 55,000, one half of whom were convicts. The exports at the same time were about £180,000. In 1848 the population had increased to 300,000, of whom but about 6,000 were convicts. The exports at the same period had reached £2,000,000 in value. (Hear, hear.) This will seem still more remarkable when I state that at the time of the separation from this country of our North American provinces, the whole exports of those provinces did not exceed in value £1,000,000 sterling. (Hear, hear.) In 1836 Melbourne scarcely existed; in 1846 it possessed 2,000 houses, with a population of 10,000, assessed at £50,000, the whole population of Port Philip being 300,000. (Hear, hear.) Altogether, South Australia, which at first, owing to some error, got into great pecuniary difficulties, has since made such extraordinary progress, that in the course of ten years its population has greatly increased, and the exports have risen in value to £300,000. (Hear, hear.) I state these facts to show that with reference to a large class of colonies under the dominion of this Crown there has been a marked increase in population and in wealth—to show the value of those relations on which so much discussion has taken place, the course of which has developed, I must think, in some persons a very superficial knowledge of the subject. (Hear, hear.)

I will now proceed to colonies which have undergone two very severe trials, the very consequence of the great advantages which they peculiarly derived from those laws of commercial monopoly which this country till lately maintained as part of its system, and the alteration of which subjected these colonies—I refer, of course, to our West India colonies—to changes which, in the view of some parties, involve their certain ruin. (Hear, hear.) The great social change there from slavery to freedom, however much it might be demanded by the rules of justice and the precepts of christianity, might well be supposed as leading to a diminution of industry in those colonies, and more especially of the more irksome and pain-