

Great-Britain.

EMIGRATION.

Observations on Emigration to British America, by J. Macgregor. Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, London; E. Smith, & Co., Liverpool.

Mr. J. Macgregor has just published an interesting pamphlet, combining a great deal of valuable information respecting the capabilities and resources of our possessions in North America, with much excellent advice and valuable knowledge to such as are about to emigrate to that part of the world. To emigrants or to persons desirous of obtaining correct information on colonial subjects, this little book cannot be too warmly recommended. The author, besides his opportunities of acquiring correct knowledge on the subject of which he treats, whilst travelling over the British possessions in America, and those derived from his intimate connexion with those interesting colonies, has profited largely by the assistance and experience of others, which have been liberally extended to him, whilst engaged on this work and a preceding one on the same subject. He has lately returned from the countries of which he treats, and we have before us the fruits of his labour and researches. In his preface he laments that so much ignorance should prevail in this country with respect to the real value and importance of the British colonies in America, and their immense resources, and states that, unimportant as the subject is deemed on this side of the Atlantic, the province of Nova Scotia alone, besides the fertility of its soil, and the value of its fisheries, possesses exhaustless mines of the best coal, immense stores of iron, of very superior quality, copper and various other minerals, together with different kinds of stone and slate, so that the possession of this single district would render the United States of America independent of Europe as a manufacturing country. To be placed in their proper light, he says, our North American possessions should be considered as forming component parts of the empire; fruitful in all the productions, vegetable and mineral, of Great Britain, and possessing a climate perfectly congenial to the constitution of Englishmen. They are thus eminently calculated to form a source of wealth and strength, and our author considers the clamours raised against them on the score of expence, and their alleged inutility, to arise from gross ignorance of their true value and importance. On this point, as with many other of his positions we are inclined to agree with Mr. Macgregor; but we presume his meaning to be, that the colonies to be thus truly valuable and important, must be placed under better management than the generality of them have hitherto been, and cease to be considered by Government merely as affording scope for ministerial patronage, and to be exposed to the mismanagement and peculation of needy and unprincipled men. He evidently contemplates such a change as that which has been partially introduced in some instances, for in speaking of the apprehensions of many, that the British possessions will finally merge into the United States, he says they are groundless, and that, with proper treatment, it is impossible to imagine subjects more loyal and well affected than the Anglo-Americans. Provided they are well governed, and consequently well affected, he considers as absurd the idea that America can gain possession of these colonies, since they can raise a militia of 180,000 men as gallant and well disciplined as any America can bring into the field; and during the last war the endeavours made by the United States to subjugate them were utterly fruitless and unavailing. He also considers the colonies most important as forming a nursery for valuable seamen, and furnishing employment for shipping, and is convinced that without colonies Great Britain would never have attained the pitch of greatness and maritime pre-eminence at which she has arrived. He strongly advocates an improved mode of intercourse with the British colonies in America, and recommends the establishment of steam communication between Valentia in Ireland and some point in Nova Scotia, both as highly advantageous to Ireland and the colonies, and as likely to be a most lucrative speculation to the projectors. He is of opinion that steam vessels form the best passenger ships, an opinion in which we fully agree with him.

Our author describes the causes and course of emigration, by which the United States were comparatively populously settled, and he ascribes the fact, that the stream of emigration continued principally in the same course after the acknowledgement of the independence of the United States, to the profound ignorance which prevailed as to the fertility and mighty resources of the British possessions. Since then, however, he estimates the annual number of emigrants to B.

America, at from 8 to 18,000. We have an interesting account of the sufferings, difficulties, and dangers endured by the early settlers, from the severity of the climate, (since much ameliorated) poverty, the attacks of Indians and wild beasts, and many others which they had to encounter, all of which, however, were overcome, and the majority of the emigrants, indeed all, except when improvidence, illness, or some unforeseen calamity intervened, rose from a state of wretched poverty to the possession of considerable property. The difficulties to be encountered by their successors are of course numerous and heavy, but they are such as may be more easily surmounted, and as our author justly observes success is not to be expected in America more than any where else, without the labour, industry, and perseverance which insure it. Mr. Macgregor cautions emigrants against the entertainment of extravagant expectations, and advises them to weigh well the nature of the enterprise they contemplate; and their own ability to carry it through, before they embark in it. Its difficulties are such as would stagger any man, were there not the example of thousands who have encountered and overcome them, and risen from a state of wretched destitution to comparative affluence and comfort, to reassure and encourage him.

Our author ascribes a great portion of the misery of Ireland to a superabundant population, and he says this arises from the improvident and early marriages to which the Irish are addicted; but it appears to us, he does not make due allowance for the effects of misgovernment, which, in the wretched and degraded state of society produced by it, may justly be described as the author of that hopeless poverty and recklessness which lead to early and improvident marriages, and a consequent superabundance of population. Be that as it may—be the imprudence natural or acquired, its effects would be highly beneficial in the thinly-peopled countries of the vast continent of America, whilst the removal of the superabundant portion of the population, in our author's opinion, would be highly advantageous to Ireland, and also to Great Britain, a large proportion of whose pauperism and distress is attributed to the vast influx of destitute Irishmen, depreciating the wages of labour, and adding to the burden of poor rates, wherever they go. Our author, therefore, advocates emigration as the best temporary expedient to relieve the distresses of both countries; but he does not confine his views to this point:—he also recommends the removal of religious dissensions, (since happily accomplished, or rather in progress, by the bill establishing civil and religious liberty on what we trust a secure and imperishable basis,) the education of the people, fitting them for an improved state of society, the removal of the mud cabins of Ireland, the destruction of the system of sub-letting, and the change of Ireland from a potato to a bread country. With respect to the colonies of America, they will require, for many years, a vast accession of settlers, but we think with our author that these ought to be as industrious, and of as correct principles and habits as possible, and that it would be both unjust and impolitic to inundate those provinces with a pauper population. If emigration be a national work, pauper emigrants at least should be conveyed to the place of location, and supported till they can support themselves. Mr. Macgregor is convinced, that provisions and tools for one year or eighteen months, would effect this, and he says that the emigrant who does not succeed with this assistance would deserve to be hung as a public defaulter. He recommends that the repayment of whatever advances may be made, shall be one of the conditions on which the emigrant holds his lands, as any thing in the shape of rent is considered a grievous burden in America. The repayment might readily be made by instalments.

Our author then communicates a fund of valuable information respecting the characteristics and capabilities of the inland and maritime parts of British America, for which we refer our readers to his pages. For many reasons which appear satisfactory, he gives the preference to the maritime settlements, and says, for instance, that from one to two hundred thousand settlers might be conveyed to New Brunswick or Nova Scotia, with greater advantage than to either of the Canadas, and at one half the expence. Speaking of the four classes of which emigrants consist, the poor, the enterprising, men of genius disappointed at home, and the discontented, Mr. M. says that the labouring classes generally find relief in America. The settlers who thrive soonest are men of steady habits, accustomed to labour. Practical farmers of this character are sure to succeed, but gentlemen farmers, or farmers uniting agriculture with commerce, or some other pursuit are as sure to fail. He enumerates the mechanical trades and other professions which do well in America, but holds out no encouragement to spinners or weavers, or the professors of law, divinity, or physic. To

the latter he conveys the unwelcome intelligence that the climate of British America is too salubrious to admit of medical gentlemen making fortunes. Our author gives a great deal of excellent advice to the emigrant respecting the necessary preparations for his enterprise; relative to laying in of tools, provisions, and farming stock; the choice of vessels, the conduct to be pursued on landing in America, and the mode of proceeding till comfortably settled. He also exposes the infamous abuse heretofore practised by persons engaged in the conveyance of emigrants, and still prevailing to a certain extent, for all of which we refer to the pamphlet. In the notes at the end of the work, many instances of individual enterprise and eminent success are given, and the notes comprise much valuable information for the guidance of both private and national schemes of emigration. To the whole is added an appendix, comprising similar information and some important documents. In conclusion, we cannot too strongly recommend this little book to the attention of every one interested in the question of emigration, or desirous of acquiring a fund of correct knowledge respecting the British colonies of North America. Mr. Macgregor is eminently entitled to the gratitude of his country for his labours and researches, and the manner in which he has communicated the fruit of them to the public.

CAPABILITIES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

(From the Quarterly Review.)

With respect to the soil, it is somewhat difficult to speak. In different parts of Europe many large tracts of ground are undoubtedly extremely rich. The plains of Seville and Valencia, in Spain; the whole vale of Lombardy, in Italy; the Touraine, and a large part of Normandy, Brittany, Picardy, and Alsace, in France; the whole maritime part of the kingdom of Belgium; and a large part of Wirtemberg, Saxony, Silesia, and Upper Austria, and all of great fertility; but speaking of whole kingdoms, it may be fairly questioned whether the arable part of our soil be not as productive as that of any continental state of the same dimensions. In the value of our minerals, we incalculably exceed any of them. We have the finest quarries of slate, freestone, and granite, in great abundance and variety; and our mines of lead, tin, copper, coal, and iron, are to be classed among the surest sources of our wealth and grandeur. Tin is found nowhere else in Europe, in considerable quantities except in Cornwall; and Cornwall and Wales alone furnish a very large proportion of the whole copper which is raised and consumed in Europe. It has been mentioned, that the mines in Almeida, in Spain, have lately produced a great quantity of lead; but we still raise nearly twice as much, and considerably more than half of what is used in this quarter of the world. To do full justice to the importance of our mines of coal and iron, would alone require a separate disquisition. The value of the iron mines in Spain is but little known; and whatever it may be, that country must always labour under great disadvantages from the want of wood or coal to work them. The ironstone of Sweden affords from fifteen to nineteen per cent. of ore, while ours seldom exceeds twelve; yet, as in this country, ironstone and coal are often drawn from the same shaft, or the same neighbourhood, we are able, from that circumstance, and from our superior capital and machinery, to meet the Swedish merchants in the markets, and actually produce more iron every year than the whole of our continental neighbours put together. The number and excellence of our coal-fields are still more important. The chief mines of coal, fit for fuel, now known on the continent are—St. Etienne, to the south-west of Lyons, and Creuzot; near Macon, in France; Sarrelouis, in the south-west part of the Prussian, Rhenish Provinces, from Cambray, by Mons, Namur, Liège, Düsseldorf, and Elberfeld, to Osnaburgh, near Sulz, in Silesia; near Pilsen and Tharand, in Saxony; near Lowositz, in Bohemia; near Brunn, in Moravia; near Graiz, in Styria; and some in Dalmatia, but all unworked; and from Gleiwitz to Tarrowitz, in the south-east corner of Prussian Poland. But, excepting the last, which, though hitherto little known, is supposed to be one of the finest coal-fields existing, our veins of coal are of greater extent and excellence than the whole of those which have hitherto been discovered on the Continent taken together; and from the power we have of employing them to smelt iron, and impelling steam-vessels on our seas and rivers, they are certainly more useful.

To these blessings we must add the abundance and excellence of the fish which swarm all around our coasts, so much exceeding what is known in the Baltic and Mediterranean; the beauty and variety of our scenery; and the salubrity and temperateness of our climate. It is not sufficiently warm to enrich us with the vine and the olive: