

A Grand System of Emigration

*Statistical account of Upper Canada*

Robert Gourlay

1822

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Price of Land, and Encouragement to Settlers.

*Lots granted to actual Settlers upon paying Office Fees and performing settling Duties—The Policy of encouraging Settlements—Labour the Standard of Value and Means of Wealth, and the Quantum of Labour proportioned to the Population—Example of New York—Lands there four times as valuable as similar Lands in this Province.*

ACCORDING to a fundamental maxim of the English constitution, all public lands are vested in the crown ; and the discretionary disposal of them, unless regulated by some act of parliament, assented to by the King, is a branch of the royal prerogative.

In the exercise of that discretion, his Majesty has heretofore thought proper to grant lots of 200 acres of the waste or wild lands of the crown in this province, to settlers, upon their payment of certain fees and charges, and performance of certain settling duties. The charges of surveying, and fees of office, amount to about 37 dollars on a lot ; and the duties of settlement required, are the clearing of five acres of the land, the building of a house, and opening of the road across the front of the lot, which is a quarter of a mile, all to be performed within a limited time. Upon these easy conditions, the lieutenant-governor in council, in his Majesty's name, has granted patents of land. But an applicant for such a grant, whether an European or American, has always been required to satisfy his excellency and the Council, by certificates from known characters, or other testimonials, that he is a person likely to be a wholesome inhabitant, and intends actually to settle upon the lands.

Since the late war with the United States, great efforts have been made to introduce settlers from the British European dominions, in preference to emigrants from the States. On such terms lands are granted to settlers. The object evidently is not to supply the means of speculation, but to encourage actual settlements. The wisdom of this policy is obvious.

The best writers and reasoners on political economy, have laid down as an axiom, that labour is the standard of value ; and that the wealth, the strength and importance of a nation, are in proportion to its quantum of productive labour ; which, under a government whose laws permit voluntary employment and free competition in business, and protect individuals in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour, will be proportionate to the number of labourers. Hence the importance of a numerous population in any country, and especially in one, where the objects and materials of labour, particularly lands, are abundant, and consequently cheap.

The neighbouring state of New York furnishes a fair comparison and example. The northern and western districts of that state resemble the adjacent districts of Upper Canada, in respect to soil, climate, and markets, being separated only by the river and lakes, four or five hundred miles. The states have wisely encouraged emigration and settlement, and have accordingly received such accessions from the other States and Europe, in addition to their own multiplication, that their census now (1811) contains nearly a million of inhabitants,

more than a third of whom have been added in the last ten years. Their wealth, and strength, and resources, and the value of their landed property, have progressed with their population. Land of similar quality, and corresponding situations, although once very cheap there, now bears a price four times as high among them as among their neighbours in this province.

This comparative view illustrates the wise policy of encouraging the settlement of the province, by granting lots, on such liberal terms, to actual settlers of sober and industrious habits.

Other landholders have no reason to complain. Every additional labourer adds something to the general stock.

The lands already cultivated are far from being carried to a maturity of cultivation, while millions of acres of fertile soil, still remaining in their natural state, are waiting for the hand of the cultivator, to render them productive, and thereby raise their value, and that of the surrounding mass, and thus increase the public welfare.

The prosperity of a nation or province is composed of the individual prosperity of its inhabitants ; and prosperous individuals, according to a well known principle of human nature, are generally loyal subjects of the government by which their persons are protected, and their property is secured.

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To the Editor of any British Newspaper [1].

*Queenston, Upper Canada, Sept. 15, 1817.*

SIR,

It will be remembered by many of your readers that in the spring of 1815 proclamations were widely circulated, inviting settlers to Canada.

Having myself occasion to visit this country, I was curious to know what had been the result, especially as I found, at Quebec and Montreal, very discordant accounts respecting it ; most people asserting that the scheme had failed of success, and that the settlers were in a state of great discomfort and discontent.

To ascertain the truth, I diverged from my route about fifty miles, and spent some days at Perth, situated on the waters of the Rideau, to which a considerable body of the people, who accepted the invitation of government, had been conducted. Here I traced the reported discontent to some neglects in the general management, and some ill conceived petty regulations, capriciously exercised towards people tenacious of their rights ; but in the main, universal satisfaction prevailed among the settlers, and a strong feeling of the good intention of government towards them.

The opportunity being a good one, of ascertaining the progress which a promiscuous body of settlers make in a given time, I constructed the annexed table, and had each man's signature attached, at once to prove the correctness of his statement, and satisfaction with his situation.

Should you think this worthy of publication, you are welcome to insert it in your paper. It may draw attention to a most important subject, the colonization of this province with British subjects ; and should it reach Scotland, it may afford satisfaction to many individuals who may not otherwise know the condition of their friends.

The scheme which government adopted in 1815 was expensive. The settlers had a free passage, rations, and tools : next year, rations and tools were furnished to those who came out ; and this year multitudes of poor people have come to Canada in expectation of being favoured in the same way, but are disappointed, having nothing given but the land (100 acres each), which many of them, from poverty, are unable to occupy.

Having made it my study, during three months residence here, to inquire into the nature of the country, and into every particular respecting settlement, I am convinced that very simple measures might be adopted, by which the redundant population of Britain could be conveyed, by a regular flow, into Canada, instead of being wasted, to the great prejudice of British interest, over the whole of America : and were such measures adopted, this province could, in a very few years, be quite equal to its own defence in war, against the United States.

ROBERT GOURLAY.

I shall here copy in the proclamation, &c. publishes in Britain, to which I allude in my letter

“ BY THE AUTHORITY OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE REGENT, ACTING IN THE NAME, AND IN BEHALF OF HIS MAJESTY, AND COMMUNICATED BY THE RIGHT HON. EARL BATHURST, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.

“ BRITISH PROVINCES IN NORTH AMERICA.

*“ Liberal Encouragement by his Majesty’s Government to Settlers inclined to proceed from Great Britain and Ireland, and Provision by Vessels, &c. for their Passage to Quebec with their Families.*

“ It is the intention of his Majesty’s government to encourage SETTLERS to proceed from Great Britain and Ireland to the British provinces in North America, and for this purpose a certain number of vessels will be appropriated for the conveyance of such persons as may be properly recommended, together with their wives and children, to Quebec, to which port only the conveyance of settlers free of expence, with other advantages, will be limited during the year. The lands will be granted to them either in Upper or Lower Canada ; in which extent is comprehended a choice of climate and of soil, adapted for every branch of cultivation.

“ The encouragement and advantages intended to be afforded to settlers, will be as follows :—

“ A passage and provisions during the voyage will be furnished by government, and on their arrival in the colony, a grant of 100 acres of land will be secured to each family, of which they will be put immediately in possession, and all their male children actually residing in the province will be entitled, on attaining the age of 21 years, to a similar grant of 100 acres each.

“ For the first six or eight months, as it may be found necessary, after the arrival (in order to enable the settlers to establish themselves upon their respective grants, and to clear and to

cultivate a portion of the land), they will be allowed rations from the public stores ; and, in case, from unforeseen events, it should be found requisite, further aid, in this respect, may be afforded according to the circumstances of the case, by issuing rations for a limited period, at a price under prime cost.

“ Axes and other necessary implements will also be furnished to them, under certain regulations, at a fixed price, not exceeding half the prime cost.

“ Should any number of families, proceeding from the same part of the United Kingdom, or possessing any joint stock or funds, be desirous of settling in the same neighbourhood in Canada, care will be taken to allot them lands as nearly as possible contiguous to each other ; and a sufficient portion of land will be appropriated in the midst of such settlers for a church, and for the maintenance of a clergyman and schoolmaster; and in case a sufficient number of settlers so united, should be accompanied from the United Kingdom by a person of either of the above functions, who possesses their confidence, and can be well recommended, and who shall be approved of by government, a salary will be provided of 100*l.* per annum to such minister, and 50*l.* per annum to the schoolmaster, for such period as shall afterwards be specified.

“ Persons who may be allowed to proceed to Canada as *SETTLERS FROM SCOTLAND*, must embark in the month of April from such Port or Ports in the Clyde, as shall be noticed in a future advertisement, where vessels will be ready to receive those for whom the necessary accommodation will be provided.

“ In order to prevent persons from making an un-warranted and improper use of the liberality of government, it will be required that every person embarking for Quebec, should at the time of embarkation deposit in the hands of the government agent the following sum :

“ Every male person above sixteen years of age, 16*l.* sterling : every woman, being the wife of any person so embarking, 2*l.* 2*s.* : children under sixteen years of age will be conveyed free of expence ; and whatever sums may be so paid by them will be repaid to them or their representatives in Canada, at the end of two years from the date of their embarkation, upon its being ascertained that they are settled on the grant of land allotted to them.

“ John Campbell, Esq. writer to his Majesty’s signet, Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, is appointed by government, commissioner and general agent in Scotland for this business, to whom communications may be made.

“ As the time for embarkation of settlers is limited, such as are at a distance, and who wish to embrace the present opportunity of settling in British America, will do well to send by post their proposals and certificates without any delay. Those testimonials must certify the general good character of applicants their professions former pursuits whether married or widowers the number of their children, distinguishing male and female ; and the ages of all. These must be obtained either from justices of the peace, clergymen, or elders of the parish, or other respectable persons.

“ It is recommended that the utmost care be taken by those who grant certificates, that they are satisfied, from personal knowledge, of the facts contained in the representation of the circumstances.

“ *Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, Feb. 22d, 1815.*”

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### Explanation of The Foregoing Conditions.

THE commissioner in the agency for government, has received a vast number of letters, requesting information in regard to the terms that have been published for applicants, to be settlers in Canada.

It has been impossible to give answers to all these letters consistently with the necessary attention to other branches of this business, especially as the time of embarkation fixed by government, (*i.e.* in April, in the Clyde) fast approaches.

Many of the questions put, may be easily solved by an attentive re-perusal of these terms, or by having recourse to intelligent neighbours, and are to be found in all the newspapers published in Scotland, for several weeks back, and they have been already transmitted for publicity to every clergyman, and will be immediately pasted upon every post-office throughout Scotland.

They will also be seen or delivered at the office, in Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, and at Mr. Duncan's, printer to the university, Argyl Street, Glasgow.

It cannot be too much impressed on the minds of applicants, nor too often enforced by those with whom they advise, that the wishes and intentions of his Majesty's government are directed, not to an increase of emigration from this part of the United Kingdom, but to divert to the British provinces in North America, the surplus population, which would otherwise proceed to the United States.

Accordingly, no solicitation whatever has been used by this office to induce persons or families to go to Canada,

The agent for government, agreeably to the instructions received, has uniformly abstained from exciting any desire for leaving Scotland, that did not before exist, and has repeatedly pointed out, especially to the more ignorant of the persons applying, every circumstance of information, to prevent disappointment, and to preclude the possibility of misunderstanding.

The following particulars published by authority of his Majesty's government, will serve as an explanation of the terms offered to settlers properly recommended, and will supersede the necessity of answering many of these letters, and of many verbal inquiries.

#### Lands.

1st. The settlers shall have the option as to the province, whether of Upper or Lower Canada ; but the precise spot must be regulated by the governor of the colony.

2d. The grants of land will be made under the same regulations as all grants of land in Canada are made. No new ones will be imposed.

3d. The grant will be made on their arrival, by deed, free of expence, and will, as all other grants do, revert to the crown, upon being abandoned, or not cultivated by the settlers.

4th. In answer to a query which has been frequently put, whether government sell lands in Canada ?—it will be noticed that there is no difficulty in making purchases in Canada, or in

obtaining leases of crown lands to any extent. Persons with capital, who take out labourers, will receive larger grants, proportioned to their capital, and their means of cultivation.

#### Deposit.

5th. The deposit of 16*l.* for persons above the age of sixteen, and 2*l.* 2*s.* for wives, &c. is indispensable. No security can be taken in lieu of money. This is intended both as a pledge that the settlers shall perform the conditions on their part, and to prevent persons from availing themselves of a passage to the United States. It also prevents persons of bad character from obtruding themselves among respectable settlers.

#### Certificates.

6th. Applicants are desired to be particular in the certificates they lodge, in terms of the paper formerly published of 22d February last. The requisites for certificates are as follow : viz.

I. General good character : applicants, who, from misfortunes, have failed in their circumstances, must bring a regular discharge from their creditors, or satisfactory evidence of a fair surrender or compromise ; otherwise they will not be suffered to embark, and shall forfeit their deposit. And for the purpose of detecting any imposition in this respect, the list of applicants and settlers is open for inspection.

II. Occupation or trade.

III. Former occupation, if changed.

IV. Whether married, unmarried, or widowers.

V. The number of children, &c. who accompany them, distinguishing male and female.

VI. The ages of all.

7th. Recourse must be had to parish registers for proof of marriages and births, or where this cannot be obtained, other satisfactory evidence. Application may be made for this purpose to magistrates, clergymen, elders of the parish, schoolmasters, or other respectable persons, with a reference to persons here or at Glasgow, when necessary.

8th. It will be necessary that those who have made up their minds to proceed to Quebec, shall immediately produce the necessary certificates, and lodge their deposit, in order that when the number is filled up for this season, the public may be apprized, to prevent disappointment, especially to those at a distance.

#### Limitation of Numbers.

9th. His Majesty's government have judged it expedient to limit the number to be provided with passages from Scotland to Canada, for this season, to 2000 *persons of the age of sixteen and upwards, with a proportion of children.*

### Accommodations on The Passage.

10th. The freight or charge for children above sixteen, and under twenty-one, to be paid for as grown persons.

11th. Bedding and other accommodation will be provided for each settler, the same as troops embarking for Canada receive.

12th. If surgeons are required for the voyage, they will be provided by the Transport Board.

13th. If settlers shall export articles liable to export duties here, or import duties in Canada, they cannot be exempted from the usual custom-house regulations.

14th. No travelling expence paid to Glasgow. From thence the settlers will be conveyed in small vessels to the transport vessels.

15th. Settlers will be carried out in transports, under the same regulations as those under which troops are carried out, two tons being allowed per man.

16th. The necessary tonnage will be in the Clyde in April, and proceed to Quebec as soon after as circumstances will permit.

### Other Particulars.

17th. In regard to pensions of sergeants, privates, &c. measures will be taken by government for continuing their pensions, and for their payment in Canada.

18th. As to single men (for instance, two brothers), who may be under or above twenty-one years of age, they go out as independent settlers, *i.e.* each brother above twenty-one years old, will have a grant of 100 acres. If one brother only is above that age, he may take out his brother, who will, on attaining the age, have a similar grant of land given him under similar conditions.

19th. A young man, under or above twenty-one, may take out his sister on the same terms as a wife, as specified in the regulations, upon depositing *3l. 2s.* ; but not more than one sister.

20th. The settlers will be forwarded as troops are forwarded, from Quebec to their place of residence, either on foot or otherwise, as may appear most expedient to the governor.

21st. Any settlers wishing to settle together, will be permitted to do so, on stating their intentions previous to sailing. Each settler above twenty-one, will, whether single or in company with others, have 100 acres, as stated in the conditions.

22d. Single women will not be permitted to proceed as settlers, unless they are daughters of a settler, or, as above mentioned, the sister of a settler.

23d. No encouragement will be given to widows with families, or without ; but their children may go out as independent settlers, upon the footing already stated.

24th. A wife may follow her husband at a future embarkation, in case such shall take place, upon her depositing 2*l.* 2*s.*

25th. Grandchildren will be permitted to go out, and will receive the same encouragement as children accompanied by their parents, on their attaining the age of twenty-one.

26th. The term *prime cost*, as relative to implements and rations, is to be understood to be what the articles cost in this country (Great Britain), and is therefore sterling money.

27th. All persons above sixteen must make the deposit required, whether servants or others.

28th. His Majesty's government are to extend the bounty mentioned in the terms already published for clergymen, pastors, and schoolmasters, without any distinction of religious sect, and they will each be entitled to 100 acres. They must each deposit the same money as the common settlers.

29th. The assistance required in building their churches, chapels, houses, school-houses, &c. or enclosures, if such shall be required, must be given by the settlers who accompany them.

30th. In answer to a query put, whether government give arms and ammunition to settlers, or any part of them, for protecting themselves ? they will be protected, as all other settlers are ; but there is no necessity, from the nature of the place, for arming individuals, except in the case of actual war ; and in regard to arms for private use, every man may in this exercise his own discretion, as in other British dominions.

31st. Rations will be allowed, free of any charge or deduction, for a limited time, as per conditions of 22d February last. The governor will exercise a discretion afterwards on this point according to the circumstances of the case.

32d. It is not intended to encourage other mechanics than those who may be useful in agriculture, or in making a first settlement ; such as carpenters, masons, bricklayers, smiths, &c.

*No Person whatever in the Highlands, or Hebrides, or elsewhere, has any delegated authority from the Government Agent, to induce persons to become settlers in Canada.*

*Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, March 24th, 1815.*

Nothing, certainly, can *appear* more fair, candid, and liberal, than the terms, declarations, and sentiments of the above publications of our home-government ; yet I shall have reflections to make upon them, in another place, which will not tally with these characteristics. Here my object is only to record facts, and arrange information as groundwork for future reference and discussion. With this view, it is proper to note what happened in the *execution* of the scheme of emigration now before us.

Attention has already been attracted to the facts staring from the statistical columns, that a month was spent by the emigrants of 1815, between the time of leaving home and time of embarking ; and that a whole year elapsed from the latter period till the time of their getting possession of the promised land.

On their arrival in Canada, it appeared as if not the slightest understanding with regard to them had previously subsisted between the home and colonial government. No land had been laid out for their occupation, and surveyors from all quarters had to be hastily put in requisition to effect this ; but so late was it in completion, that at the beginning of the following summer there was not room provided to hold the party together, and many straggled off to other quarters of the country, much to the detriment of the principal settlement. The principal place of settlement lay 20 miles within the wilderness, and through this the emigrants, unaccustomed to the woods, and unskilled in the use of the axe, had to cut themselves a road, their labour sweetened with the customary reflection of Canadian farmers, that idle drones shared in its profits ; that they were toiling for the good of non-occupants ; and here a single family held possession of 18,000 acres, the reward of General Arnold's *constancy* during the revolutionary war of America.

While the settlers at Perth most readily and warmly expressed to me their satisfaction with the country, their farms, and the good intention of government towards them, their complaints of bad agency were almost unanimous, and, from some, bitter in the extreme; indeed the whole country round was loud in exclamations on this subject, and a little specimen of the prevailing spirit and feeling has appeared in one of the Kingston reports. In that report, the word "*puppies*" does not seem very polite ; but, in fact, it has turned out not only justifiable, but singularly appropriate, for one of the persons alluded to has since proved himself to be a *thievish dog*, by embezzling the government stores to a great amount, and then flying the country.

In my letter to the editors of British newspapers, above quoted, I slurred over what I had then heard as well as I could ; partly, because I did not then believe the worst that was said ; partly, because it was not for me, publicly to proclaim the misconduct of individuals ; and partly, because I hoped to be soon home, where I might privately communicate my information to those in authority, who might effectually interfere. Now, though interference or correction are out of the question, it may still be of use to record some of the ways in which the emigrants were maltreated, and rendered uncomfortable, to shew how the most generous designs, and even well-conceived plans, may be rendered abortive.

Some lots of land within the range of settlement could not possibly be cultivated by a single hand, from being flooded, rocky, or matted with cedar trees. When a settler reported his lot to be of this description, he had another location, or still another and another, if they successively proved unfit for occupation. By-and-by many of these lots became notoriously well known, yet the agent would, with the most wanton disregard of the time and trouble of applicants for land, send them, perhaps a dozen, one after another, to look at the same wretched lot, only to wander for days in the wilderness after disappointment. Often, too, the settlers would come from a distance for the tools and other articles promised by government, when the agent, merely to indulge his own caprice and ease, would send them empty away. Again, a mason, a tailor, or other tradesman, might find advantage in quitting his farm for a time, to work for others at his trade ; that moment his rations were withheld, even though his farm improvements were proceeding under the hands of a hired axeman, better qualified for this task than himself ; but a settler might quit his own farm-work, and perform jobs of any sort for the agent, without being deprived of rations. Such were the practices which went on for years at the Perth settlement, and which, however grievous and well known to all, might have continued to go on, had not his majesty's servant found higher gratification in the act which rendered it necessary for him to decamp.

It will be observed, from the explanatory articles, that the grant of land was to be made by deed, on the arrival of the settlers ; but two years afterwards this was not accomplished, and

murmurs prevailed on that account. The settlers told me they did not fear for themselves ; but were uneasy, because the rights of their children were thus held in jeopardy ; and it did, indeed, surprise myself, upon talking on the subject with the officer in charge, that “ it was not meant to follow out Campbell’s rules,” meaning the terms of the published proclamation.

The proclamation provided that the deposit money of settlers was to be repaid two years from the date of embarkation. From the table it will be seen, that the embarkation took place generally about the 24th, 27th, and 30th of June, 1815. My first visit to the settlement was on the 1st of July, 1817, a few days after the two years had expired. None of the deposit was then paid ; and as the settlers, with few exceptions, had expended, by this time, their last penny, the need of cash was subjecting them to serious inconveniences. Many of them said, if it had been punctually paid, their growing crop might have been larger, as, in that case, they could have purchased a full proportion of seed for their cleared land, which could not be obtained without the cash they had reckoned on.

The settlers were here too impatient, and had, I suspect, fallen into a mistake. They had calculated from the appointed time of embarkation (*i.e.* in April), not the actual time. I spoke of this complaint to the officer, and a few weeks afterwards all was made good ; and, indeed, ultimately, government went far beyond the contract with the settlers. By the proclamation, the settlers could only claim rations for six or eight months after their arrival, but these were continued till August, 1817, and the crop of that year being found deficient, from the effects of frost, half rations were again issued, and continued to the greater part till the harvest of 1818. Thus, in point of expenditure, government went far indeed to establish this settlement.

It was an *experiment*, as we may understand from the declaration in the proclamation, that the encouragement offered was “ limited during the year :” but what has been gained by the experiment ? or, as an experiment, under such management as set forth, was it a fair one ? As an experiment, did it throw out any light as to the conduct of other schemes of emigration ? or did it give any encouragement to the second experiment now in operation at the Cape of Good Hope ? an experiment which has embarked 5000 people to suffer much misery, and at an expense of £50,000 voted by parliament for the purpose.

Nearly two months ago, I learned from relations and friends of those who had gone out as settlers to the Cape, that their expectations were disappointed as to the country, and within the last ten days the truth has burst upon the public through the medium of the newspapers ; witness two letters which I shall here copy from the Morning Chronicle of the 11th and 15th of September, 1820.

From the Morning Chronicle of Sept. 11, 1820.

*An Emigrant’s Letter from the Cape of Good Hope to his respectable Employer, whose Service he left.*

May 4, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

You told me true when you said I might as well blow out my brains as come upon this expedition. Indeed I have totally ruined myself. Government is not to blame : they have done every thing for us that we can possibly expect. But the man who conducted us out grossly deceived us in London respecting the place ; and he has now got 4000 acres of land for bringing us to this cursed place, where he has left us altogether to shift for ourselves. We were

nearly five months on board, during which time many quarrels took place, and the people or ship's crew robbed the trunks and boxes : my boxes were robbed of many things. Our leader never troubled himself about it, or any thing ; and the result was that many respectable families left us the moment we landed. On the 17th March, when we got into Table Bay, not one of us was suffered to land, except our leader, who gave us all an infamous character ; and we were immediately ordered away to Algoa Bay, and there landed and sent 150 miles in waggons to the banks of the Great Fish River, where after measuring one acre of land for each person to build his house on, they shot us down like as much rubbish. The horror I then felt I cannot describe ; I felt I had used you ill ; and for what ? a *bubble*.

I am trying to get back to Cape Town if possible, but have but little hope of success. Lord Charles Somerset is in London, I understand, or I should petition him to give me a passage home.

Although I have no hope of ever seeing you again, yet could I ever return, and you would receive me, I never would leave you. Your's ever,

(Signed) BARTHOLOMEW GUNNING.

P. S. We have not to blame government, either here or at home. They have done every thing that was promised ; but we have deceived ourselves.

Another Letter.

Morning Chronicle, Sept. 15, 1820.

*Graham's Town, Cape of Good Hope, May 27, 1820.*

DEAR FRIENDS, With grief of heart I write. I sent home my account of our passage. We landed safe at Algoa Bay on the 28th March, and went into camp for a few days ; then went on our journey to Graham's Town. During our journey, my wife was taken ill with the badness of the road, as it is beyond all description: it is over mountains and rocks almost impassable : sometimes we went down holes four feet deep, enough to shake the strongest constitution to pieces. After we got to Graham's Town, I went to get some wine for my wife ; but the inhabitants durst not sell any to the settlers. Somerset, the commandant, very kindly gave me one bottle of Port wine for my wife, as she was very ill, which was a great nourishment to her. After leaving Graham's Town we found the road worse ; and after ascending a very lofty mountain my wife looked down : she seeing the road still rugged and full of stones, it turned her blood, and instead of getting better, she got worse, and continued so till we got down to our unfortunate and miserable destination, which we reached on the ninth of May. (Death of his wife, &c. detailed.)

Here there is nothing but rocks and barren sands, surrounded on one side by Gaffers, and on the other by wild beasts. You will all curse me for coming : pray do not. Oh ! had I taken the advice of my departed wife, and that of our friends, previous to emigration, then I should never have seen this place. There is not one out of one hundred but laments their folly, and wish themselves in England again, with all its badness ; and we trust that the Almighty will pour down his vengeance on those who induced us with fair promises to thus emigrate.

When I landed at Algoa Bay, I had not one single shilling, having been obliged to spend every farthing on my passage, for the support of my family. Pray advise all our acquaintances, who waited to hear my opinion of this part of the world, to remain at home.

Your unfortunate Brother,

R. H.

WHAT a contrast do these letters afford to the “ well satisfied” --- “ well satisfied” --- “ well satisfied” of my statistical table ! and what now is the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say to proposals for emigration to our North American colonies ? Lord Archibald Hamilton, on the 28th April, suggested “ *an emigration to our colonies in North America as the most effectual means of mitigating distress.* ” The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, that “ *before such a proposition was entertained, it would be wise to wait for some account of the colony at the Cape of Good Hope.* ” We have now waited,—we have now the accounts, and what is to be said ? Shall a third *experiment* be made without due consideration, without consulting *principles* and *facts* essential to be known, before any experiment of the kind can have even a chance of success ? The subject of emigration is of the highest importance to be rightly understood, and, at this time, when millions of people are starving in the midst of plenty, for want of employment, or throwing themselves for relief on parish funds, demands the most deep and solemn attention.

Was it not clear that at the end of the war we should have an overflow of people ? Was it not clear to every one versed in the history of English poor laws that we should continue to have a redundant population, even for years after any plan could be made effectual, to correct the increasing evils of these laws, and independent of every other consideration.

Good heavens ! shall we be driven by conviction itself to the alternative of deciding, either that a British minister has no understanding, or no heart ? Surely it can serve *me* in nothing to be severe or uncharitable ; but, knowing as I do, that Canada has store for the maintenance of *ten millions* of people ; knowing that 50,000 could be annually transported thither, with comfort to the individuals, and profit to the nation ; having, for more than three years, devoted my whole reflection to the subject ; having offered myself to the Canadian parliament, and to the British parliament, with a view to make good this truth ; having been persecuted, nay, as to worldly circumstances, ruined in following up my purpose of inquiry as to it ; and, at the present time, struggling with impaired health to lay before the British public this volume of facts, by which common sense, humanity, self-interest, and duty, may be invited to give their aid, can I bridle in expressions of feeling and be held guiltless, when cold-blooded dalliance openly insults a cause so pressing, so imposing, and great ?

The veriest child that has the rudiments of geography, the most simple clown that can read a page, may know that the Cape of Good Hope cannot be compared with our North American colonies, as a place for the comfortable settlement of poor emigrants :—the Cape of Good Hope, more than twice the distance from home, and to which the cost of conveyance is five times as much as that to Canada ! the Cape of Good Hope, savage with rocks, sterile with sands, infested with Caffers, and filthy with Hottentots ! How can such a frightful waste be compared for a single moment with Upper Canada, the most delightful region upon earth ; where winter’s cold tempers only to manhood, and summer’s heat warms only to love ; where nature exhibits her finest specimens of the sublime and beautiful ; where she calls only for the touch of industry to satisfy every want and desire [2]. Good God ! forgive me for one more exclamation before I again return to the drudgery of statistical detail and proof. The government of Canada remonstrates against the sending thither emigrants, because “ *the*

*country is already overloaded*” !!! Twenty millions of most fertile acres overloaded with a population of 100,000, and an annual addition of 10,000 ! ! [3] Gracious Being ! pardon contempt and indignation at such a monstrous and unblushing declaration, such a glaring manifestation of delusion and mismanagement.

Soldiers discharged in Canada formed at first the great mass of settlers in the newly surveyed townships of Drummond, Beckwith, Bathurst, and Gouldbourne. When I paid my first visit to Perth, in 1817, I was told that nearly 1000 were then located. Some of them were doing well, but many were very unpromising as settlers ; and did indeed remain only till the term of receiving rations expired, or till they acquired a right to sell the land given them. This has been the uniform issue of military settlements from first to last in Canada, and in some degree also in the United States of America. Soldiers, in general, choose their trade only to indulge in idleness, and give reins to a roving disposition ; and, after having spent 20 or 30 years in the profession of *gentlemen*, cannot easily train into the habits of sober and persevering industry.

At the first settlement of Upper Canada, it was not uncommon for soldiers to sell their 200 acre lots of land for a bottle of rum. Now-a-days, only 100 is granted, and settlers are prohibited from selling till after three years’ residence, and the performance of certain easy duties. Still, I have been told since coming home, by an half-pay officer of the Perth settlement, that scarcely one soldier out of fifty now remains there for good.

The deserted lots have been for the most part filled up with emigrants from Britain and Ireland.

Rideau and Ganannoque rivers, with their many lakes, profusely water the northern and western parts of the Johnstown district ; nor would the expence be great, to render these useful as water communications. Little else would be wanted for this than dams and locks. The proposal mentioned in the Appendix to the Sketches, of communicating by water from Kingston to Ottawa river is quite practicable, It was keenly entertained by the military after the war. Plans and specifications were drawn out, and advertisements appeared for months together in the Upper Canada newspapers for estimates ; but who was to go to the expence of surveying and estimating, while it did not appear that money was provided to defray the cost ?—So the whim flagged.

[1] This letter ...was published, I find, in the Salisbury Journal of November 34, 1817, and other Newspapers.

[2] I must caution the reader against thinking, that, by using lofty language, I am losing myself in the clouds. I use it for the express purpose of arresting attention, not only to the vast superiority of Upper Canada over every other country to which the British government can send emigrants ; but to the monstrous delusion of comparing it with the Cape, New Holland, and Van-Diemen’s Land, in this respect. Whenever Canada is spoken of in England, an objection is instantly started to the climate. This error has been riveted by the reports of merchants, who seldom have drawn their experience but from a residence at Quebec and Montreal, where the climate is no doubt disagreeably severe in winter. It is quite otherwise in Upper Canada, where, in fact, the winter is the most delightful season, and where, throughout the whole year, the air is so dry, balmy, and elastic, as not only to contribute to health, but greatly to lighten and stimulate the animal spirits ; indeed, where solitude, ignorance, and poverty, have not degraded the inhabitants, the effects are very visible in their conversation and manners : well circumstanced as to worldly affairs, and independent of ministerial influence, they are brave, lively, and generous-hearted.

[3] The emigrants who arrived at Quebec in 1819, amounted in number to 12,500 ; but more than ½ of them, it was said, went into the United States. Mr. Buchanan, our American consul, directed about 2,000 British subjects, the same year, from the States into Canada ; and to allow that 1750 emigrated from the States into Canada otherwise, is allowing a great deal. This would make up, in all, the sum of 10,000 above spoken of.

Statistical account of Upper Canada (1822)

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