

to particular notice in this place, as will be found from the following letters on the subject, addressed by Mr. Read to his Excellency Sir John Cradock.

“ *Bethelsdorp, 7th July, 1812.*

“ Sir,

“ Your Excellency's kind promises towards this institution,—it being your full determination to put a stop to all oppression in this part of his Majesty's dominions,—and your readiness to give redress to those who have the happiness to be placed under your Excellency's government, encourage me to address myself to you on the present occasion. The impositions imposed upon the Hottentots have been great and many, and none more visible or more shameful than that which gives rise to the present complaint, and against which I doubt not your Excellency will be ready to show abhorrence and disdain. I received on the 3d July, a note from Major Cuyler, directing that if the two Hottentots, the names of whom the cornet would show on a paper, were at Bethelsdorp, I was to direct them to serve out their time. The paper alluded to was a declaration from the Secretary that, in the year 1805, two Bastard children named Greef and Anna, had been enregistered by O. Kemp and W. Moleman, by order of the former landdrost; the first girl as being at that time five years of age, the latter four, both to serve till the age of eighteen years*. These two persons I received into the institution on the 7th April, on their declaration that they had no lawful engagement with any inhabitant. I perceived immediately that the claim now made was a

* This case has been briefly related at page 181, where the result of Mr. Read's appeal will be found stated.

gross imposition, and sent the girls to Major Cuyler with a letter, a copy of which I inclose to your Excellency, and received only in return an order forbidding me to receive any Hottentots whatever into the institution, except those already enregistered, before they had been with him, and received his permission. With respect to these persons, one is supposed to be about twenty-four years of age, and the other not much less; one would have had to serve six years, and the other seven, if it had not been for my interference.

“ My solicitation in particular is with respect to Major Cuyler’s orders. I believe no other institution is laid under such restrictions, and I cannot possibly comprehend how the major conceives that by this means such impositions will be prevented. Were it possible for me, upon the slightest ground, to believe the major to be a friend to the institution, or to the instruction of the Hottentots, I should be more induced to submit in silence; but as many instances have proved to the contrary, (some of which your Excellency could see in the deposition of the late Rev. Dr. Vanderkemp, and in none more than in case 108 of Piet Jantjes and Sturm Cornet,) I feel it my duty to implore that it may please your Excellency to recall the order of the major, as I fear the effects would soon be visible with those poor Hottentots, who wish to get religious instruction. That your Excellency may be assured of the truth of what I have related, I send the original of the major’s orders, and the paper alluded to, written by his secretary. With confidence in your Excellency’s good intentions, I shall wait.

“ I have the honour, &c.,

(Signed) “ J. READ.”

“ *His Excellency, SIR JOHN CRADOCK.*”

The following case is adduced as an additional illustration of this subject :—

On the 7th of December, 1820, the Rev. J. Barker, the missionary then at the head of the institution, Bethelsdorp, received an order from Colonel Cuyler, requiring that ten or twelve men should proceed without delay to the Government Farm at Somerset, to assist in cutting down the harvest. The distance they had to travel was about one hundred and twenty miles. No money was advanced to them to prepare them for their journey; and, to fortify their minds against the apprehension of starvation, they were merely told that, at three different places upon the road, provisions would be found for them. They were not made at all acquainted with the length of time during which their services would be required. No option was allowed them to take with them their families or their cattle; and no provision was made for their families during their absence. They received their pay only from the day they commenced work at Somerset, and no allowance was made to them for the time consumed in going or returning, which common justice demanded; nor was there any arrangement made, by which they should obtain food whilst on their journey home. They were not only employed in getting in the harvest, but also were directed to assist in erecting the walls of a house, and in preparing charcoal; and they received no portion whatever of their wages till the period of their discharge—nearly, if not fully, three months after their arrival. Their wages, also, did not exceed four skillings per diem (ninepence sterling); and this is not more than the inhabitants of Bethelsdorp can obtain, within a few miles of their own station, for reaping grain; and have, at the same

time, a sufficiency of food found for their families as well as themselves.

The rate of wages at Somerset was, however, much higher than that by which the Hottentots, employed by the landdrost at Uitenhage, are paid; the wages for what is called government work, at the latter place, being two skillings (or fourpence halfpenny) per day only. It is a hard case, indeed, that all the burden of what is called government work should fall upon the Hottentots; and that they should, under various pretexts of being employed in the service of government, be compelled to labour, under official men, for one-half, often one-fourth only, and, in some cases, for one-sixth or eighth of the wages they might receive were they treated as the other colonists are, and allowed to carry their labour to the best market.

The following statement, which relates to a period so recent as December 1825, has been communicated to me by a gentleman of the highest respectability, who was in that part of the country when the occurrence he relates took place, and who learned the facts from the undoubted authority of some of the local functionaries on the spot.

The landdrost of Somerset had some time previously sent a Hottentot with his waggon, to bring some goods for him from another village. Unfortunately for the Hottentot, there happened to be a small cask of Cape brandy among the goods; and though in other respects a useful and faithful servant, he could not resist the temptation thus placed within his reach: he tapped the barrel, and drank part of the liquor. The theft was readily discovered, and the culprit was punished by flogging and imprisonment. Most masters would have

been satisfied with this, but not so this worshipful magistrate. He only released the man from prison in order to place him, together with his *wife and family*, under contract to a person in the village, (such being the high powers with which such functionaries are vested), for a period of *three years*, at the rate of ten rix-dollars (fifteen shillings sterling) per annum ; with the further proviso, that no part of this pittance of wages should go to the Hottentot or his family, but that the whole amount, for the three years' servitude, (thirty rix-dollars in all,) should be paid over, in advance, by the new master to himself (the magistrate), in compensation for the brandy which the Hottentot had drank*.

The wages which this same Hottentot had for several years received from Mr. Hart, before he came into the landdrost's service, and which he could still readily obtain in the district, if left at liberty to hire himself, was fifty rix-dollars *per annum*, a suit of clothes, and provisions for his family. In Albany, any respectable Hottentot family could, at that time, obtain ten rix-dollars per month, and provisions ; many earn much more.

This same magistrate had, also, managed to get two other Hottentot families placed under contract to himself for a term of three years, at the rate of fifteen rix-dollars per annum for each family. Nevertheless, these same individuals had received, the preceding year, from Mr. Hart, and might still readily obtain in the neighbourhood, if left to their free disposal, fifty rix-dollars per

* A cask of Cape brandy, called a *half aum*, and containing nineteen gallons, may be purchased, in any part of the colony, at from twenty to thirty rix-dollars.

annum, with provisions and clothing. Such are some of the effects of magisterial influence at the Cape, as exercised on the Hottentot race. Such stories have been often told of the Dutch boors and functionaries; but the functionary in question was neither a Dutchman nor an African, but a British military officer, and a special favourite, at that time, of the colonial government.

Several of the preceding cases, with many others now passed over in silence, were laid before the colonial government, in a memorial addressed to Lord Charles Somerset in 1822, to which allusion has already been made; but to such representations no redress, and, in many instances, even no reply was granted. Every representation which I made to the colonial government, of the sufferings of the Hottentot people, was followed by fresh oppressions on the part of the colonial authorities; nor have we reason to expect, in the present state of human nature, that it will be otherwise till those authorities shall cease to have any longer an interest in enslaving them.

These and numerous cases of the same kind which might be adduced, afford sufficient proof of the hardships to which the Hottentots are exposed, and sufficiently account for the hopeless state of wretchedness to which they are reduced. Had the farmers been the only party in the colony interested in keeping up this system of oppression, it would have been long since mitigated; but what have the natives to look for while the protecting power of the colonial government is, by its interest, enlisted on the side of oppression? Before we take our leave of this part of our subject, we shall take the liberty of introducing a few reflections in connexion with the design of this work.

It is evident, from the preceding statements, that no permanent amelioration of the condition of the aborigines of South Africa is to be expected from any recommendation to the local authorities of the country. They have at this moment a greater interest in oppressing them than the other colonists have ; and justice and humanity have nothing to expect from the generality of men, when their interest and their duty are found taking different directions.

It is matter of surprise that the wisdom, so strikingly evinced by the Roman statesmen and lawyers, in the salutary provisions introduced into the system of their provincial governments, should have been so little attended to, by those who have had to legislate for the British colonies under the king's government. While the governors of the provinces were armed with the sword of justice, while they could inflict corporal punishment, and exercise on capital offences the power of life and death, they were not allowed to indulge the condemned criminal with the choice of his own mode of execution, or to pronounce a sentence of the mildest and most honourable kind of exile.

It has been remarked on this article, that the distinction which seems to grant the larger while it denies the smaller degree of authority, was founded on a very rational motive. The passions of a provincial magistrate might frequently provoke him into acts of oppression, which affected only the freedom or the fortunes of the subject, though, from a principle of prudence, perhaps of humanity, he might still be terrified by the guilt of shedding innocent blood. It may likewise be considered that exile, considerable fines, and choice as to the mode of dying, relate more particularly to the rich and the

noble ; and the persons the most exposed to the avarice or resentment of a provincial magistrate, were thus removed from his obscure persecution to the more august tribunal of the prætorian prefect.

To prevent a corrupt bias, which might arise from having his interest and his duty placed in opposition to each other, the strictest regulations were established to exclude any person, without the special dispensation of the emperor, from the government of the province in which he was born* ; and to prevent the governor or his son from contracting marriage with a native or an inhabitant †, or from purchasing slaves, lands or houses within the limits of his jurisdiction ‡.

It was by acting upon such principles as these, that the Romans extended, and so long preserved, their empire ; and it is by acting upon similar principles, that England will preserve her own greatness, and hand down her fame to future ages.

The Dutch preceded us in the formation of colonies : they opened to us the sea ; they taught us the principles of navigation and commerce ; and their flag covered

* *Ut nulli patriæ suæ administratio sine speciali principis permissu permittetur.* (Cod. Justinian. l. i., tit. xli.) This law was first enacted by the Emperor Marcus, after the rebellion of Cassius. (Dion, l. lxxi.) The same regulation is observed in China, with equal strictness and with equal effect.

† *Pandect., l. xxiii., tit. ii., n. 38, 57, 63.*

‡ *In jure continetur, ne quis in administratione constitutus aliquid compararet.* (Cod. Theod., l. viii. tit. xv., leg. 1.) This maxim of common law was enforced by a series of edicts, (see the remainder of the title,) from Constantine to Justin. From this prohibition, which is extended to the meanest officers of the governors, they except only clothes and provisions. The purchase within five years may be recovered, after which, on information, it devolves to the treasury.

the ocean, from the eastern shores of America to the coasts of India. During the early period of their history, they paid particular attention to the interests of the aborigines of their colonies. Their instructions to their governors were full of wisdom and humanity. "It is not," says the Dutch East India Company, in numerous communications to the Cape government, "our object to oppress or enslave the natives, but to elevate and improve them : " and their sincerity in these declarations was then evinced by the care they took to prevent it ever becoming the interest of governors, and their civil and military servants, to act in opposition to these principles.

Agreeably to the Justinian Code *, the governor and the civil and military servants of the Company were prohibited from holding land in the colony ; and there was an example, in the last century, of a Dutch governor being stripped of a single farm, at Hottentot's Holland, and afterwards recalled, and tried on different charges, the principal of which had reference to his conduct towards the Hottentots.

While the Dutch government exercised its power to promote the general interests of its colonial dependencies, each of those dependencies, under its paternal culture, added to the wealth of the parent state ; in the same manner that the soil repays the cultivator for the wealth he expends upon its improvement. But, when the thirst of gain had absorbed every other passion, and every thing came to be valued according as it ministered to individual rapacity, those very colonies, whence she

* See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iii, p.52.

derived her former wealth, ceased to be any longer productive.

Nothing can be more dissimilar than the practice which originated with the Romans, and was copied by the Dutch government till a late period, and that which has been followed by the British colonial government of the Cape of Good Hope.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Colonial system towards the Hottentots extended to all the other Free Coloured Inhabitants.—Causes which promote or retard Population.—Obstructions to Industry in the Hottentots.—Consumption of British Goods which would result from improving their condition.—Injurious effects of the existing system to the welfare of the Colony.—Comparison between the present condition of the Hottentots and that of the Peasantry of Britain in the feudal times.—Remarks of Dr. Adam Smith.—Short-sighted Policy of the Colonial Government in oppressing the Natives.—Remarks on Sir J. Cradock's Letter to Mr. Campbell.—Comparison between the Hottentots at the Missionary Institutions and those in the service of the Boors.—Letter from Earl Bathurst to Lord C. Somerset.—Observations on the Views expressed in it.

IN all my future reasonings upon the subject now under consideration, it will be of importance to our argument to keep in remembrance, that all the coloured population of South Africa, under the jurisdiction of the British government, including Bushmen, Caffers, Bechuana captives and refugees, and also the prize negroes, are suffering under the same oppressions with the colonial Hottentots. They are regarded in the same light in the eye of the law : the proclamations of government which apply to the one apply to all the others ; and the treatment which they receive from the local authorities of the country, and from the colonists, is in all respects the same. While this is recollected, in pleading the cause of the Hottentots, we shall feel our benevolence enlarged by reflecting, that we are not pleading the cause of a tribe only, but of various hordes and tribes of the

nations in South Africa now under the British government, and of all those numerous and interesting tribes and nations in that country, that must, in future, from the increasing population and extension of the colony, fall under its dominion. After the descriptions which have been given of the present condition of the various classes of the natives of South Africa, I shall be excused if, before closing this volume, I make an appeal to the British Government, the British Parliament, and the British public, in their behalf. In pursuance of this object, we shall first consider their claims to be treated as a free people, on the grounds of policy; and this part of the subject will, for obvious reasons, supply the largest portion for our remarks.

With respect to an increase of labourers, it scarcely requires an argument to prove that this can only be done by furnishing that class of people with the means of subsistence, so as to enable them to rear large families.

In the present day, it is a general maxim, placed beyond controversy, that every people do increase in their numbers exactly in proportion to their means of subsistence. If they are amply provided for with the necessaries and conveniences of life, their increase will be rapid, and *vice versâ*.

When Barrow contrasted the large families of the boors with the small families of the Hottentots, and expressed his surprise that Hottentot women should be so unprolific when connected with Hottentot men, and that there should be no deficiency of that nature when united to colonists, without adverting to the cause, he added an additional proof of their wretchedness to his other proofs adduced on that subject. Penury and

oppression, and the anxiety and distress of mind arising from these circumstances, are as unfavourable to the increase of population, as they are to the formation and establishment of habits of industry and cleanliness.

Supposing, as in the case of the Hottentot, there is a demand for labour, it may be stated, as almost a self-evident proposition, that to stimulate him to industry, he must have security afforded him, that he shall have a just and full reward for his labour. Man is naturally indolent, and there are but two ways of overcoming his natural aversion to labour,—fear, or hope; the first arises from the apprehension of punishment, and is the motive of the slave; the second is the more powerful, being most agreeable to nature, and cannot exist, except the labourer has a fair compensation secured to him, as a remuneration for his exertions.

If Hottentots are improvident, and without ambition*, to account for this state of mind you are to

* In this instance I have, merely for argument's sake, admitted the charges brought against the Hottentots; for whatever truth there may be in these charges as it respects the Hottentots in the Graaff-Reinet district, they are not applicable to the Hottentots at our institutions.

From the length of time Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser resided at the colony, and the opportunities he had of observing the Hottentot character, his views on this subject, as exhibited by the following extract from a letter dated at the Barracks, near Graham's Town, 7th December 1822, will be received with great deference. "I certainly do think, that the changes effected upon the Hottentots under favourable circumstances, are such as will *fully justify* the idea, that their character is such as will amply repay the labour bestowed on cultivating it; and I feel convinced that the generality of the Hottentots are a people *far superior* in every respect to the ideas generally entertained of them (and that more particularly at home, and by those who, from not knowing the Hottentots, are

look not to any physical peculiarity in their natural constitution, but to the circumstances under which they are placed. It is impossible to mark the state of degradation to which Hottentots are reduced, and not inquire,—how men can be elevated, while the burdens which oppress them are so great?—how they can be industrious, when the sinews of industry are so much cramped?—or, how they can be expected to discover any thing like even a virtuous emulation, while precluded, by their circumstances, from rising above a condition of slavery the most hopeless and wretched?

It may be further added, that the Hottentot, to have a full reward for his toil, should be allowed full liberty, without restriction, to settle where he can have the best return for his labour. It is on this judicious principle that the law of settlement in England has been lately amended. In my strictures on the proclamation of 1809, I have endeavoured to show the injustice of the restrictive regulation, by which the Hottentot is prevented from going beyond the jurisdiction of his landdrost, or field cornet, without permission; and the numerous facts which evince its crying injustice, might be adduced to show its impolicy. By the law of passes, a Hottentot, not at a missionary institution, is obliged to be in service; and it is no uncommon thing for masters,

consequently ignorant of the many good qualities which they *naturally possess*. I am clearly of opinion that I could select (or name) eight or a dozen Hottentots, from the institution of *Theopolis*, as also a number from the other institutions, and many who have been discharged from the Cape corps, whom I would consider in *every respect* fully as *trust-worthy*, intelligent, and industrious, &c., as the generality of the African burghers (or farmers) who reside in the frontier districts, as well as some of those in other parts of the colony.

when these Hottentots refuse to enter into fresh contracts with them, to send them to the jail, and keep them there, till they agree to the terms offered them. I could mention families, even in Cape Town, who obtained Hottentots from the jail, who had been incarcerated under the action of this law, and who do their masters' work at four rix-dollars a month, and clothes, while the same masters hire out their own slaves at the rate of twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, forty, and forty-five rix-dollars a month. Were an inquiry instituted into the conduct of Hottentots hired in this manner, it will be found that, in some instances, they are as much valued by the families in which they serve as the slaves; and it is certain, that were they not obliged to enter into contracts, but allowed to carry their labour to the best market, instead of four rix-dollars per month, they would be receiving from fifteen to twenty per month.

If it is a settled principle, that the Hottentots have no rights—that they are *bonâ fide* the property of the colonial government, then it may be perfectly equitable to allow them to fall in this manner into the hands of the local authorities of the country as one of the perquisites of office; but if the practice were even consistent with our notions of the principles of justice, it is utterly at variance with all the principles of sound policy. Considering the Hottentots simply as property, it is the interest of the proprietor to raise the value of that property as much as possible; and no mode of farming it out can be more opposite to the true interest of the colony, or more calculated to depress its value, than the present system of the colonial government. Those formerly at the head of the go-

vernment seem never even to have thought of giving up a present advantage for future gain, nor to have contemplated the aborigines of the country as consumers, or in any other light than as labourers furnishing a present accommodation to their masters. But whatever advantage the local authorities of the country and their friends may derive from keeping the Hottentots in their present condition, it will be seen by the following facts, that the system is as much opposed to the general interests of the colony, and to those of the mother-country, as it is to the interests of the Hottentots.

We have already shown, at page 216, that in 1822, the British goods consumed at Bethelsdorp amounted to the sum of twenty thousand rix-dollars. If we rate the number of the consumers at one thousand*, and the Hottentots within the colony at thirty thousand, it will be found that by raising all the Hottentots of the colony to the condition of Hottentots at *Bethelsdorp*, a new and extensive market would be created for British goods. We say nothing of the increased consumption of British manufactures which would be occasioned by the emulation stirred up in the families of the farmers by the improvement in the dress of the Hottentots, or of the increase of our exports which would necessarily arise from the additional stimulus which would be given to the industry of the Hottentots,

* One thousand, the number taken here, is not perhaps equal to the number of Hottentots on the books of the Bethelsdorp institution, including those among the farmers; but it must considerably exceed the number of the actual consumers. Add to the Hottentots the other classes of the natives within the colony, and the argument will be further strengthened.

by the increase of their artificial wants. By a comparison of the terms of the contract already mentioned in page 223, by which the Hottentots of Bethelsdorp undertook, in 1822, the transport of the government stores from Algoa Bay to Graham's Town, with the prices formerly given to the farmers for that service, it will be found that the Hottentots having this contract, furnished a net saving to government of 11,175 rix-dollars in six months.

Some of the evil effects of the existing system have been strikingly exemplified since the arrival of the English settlers in the colony. On many accounts it is the obvious policy of government to encourage free labourers; but free labourers can have no encouragement while the Hottentots are compelled to serve at such reduced wages. Blacksmiths and carpenters may find a return for their labour in the existing state of things; but the local authorities of the districts and their friends will not give a sufficient remuneration to the free labourer, while they can compel the Hottentots to serve them for a trifle. On this very principle, the landdrosts of Graham's Town have, for years past, been in the habit of ordering Hottentots from *Theopolis*, on what is called government service, while the poor settlers were in want of encouragement, in Albany, wandering over the country in quest of bread, or taking refuge in Cape Town.

To allow the Hottentot the power of carrying his labour to the best market, is one of the first steps necessary in attempting to elevate the character of the coloured population, to undermine the system of slavery, to encourage the increase of free labourers, and give a healthy stimulus to the industry of the colony.

These are but a few out of many instances which

might be adduced, in support of the principle which furnishes the basis of our present reasonings; but the principle itself is so evident to gentlemen at all acquainted with the principles of political economy, as scarcely to require illustration.

It is obvious that, while the Hottentots remain in their present degraded and wretched state, their condition must have a depressing influence on the industry and morals of all ranks of the inhabitants; but by elevating them above their present level, the whole colony will be elevated along with them. The legislative enactment which converts any portion of men into slaves, reduces the masters to the condition of tyrants; and the law which breaks the chains of slavery, and takes the whip from the hand of the master, does as much for the improvement of the one, as it does for the comfort of the other.

To what does England owe the subversion of the feudal system, and its high rank among the nations of the world, but to the emancipation and elevation of its peasantry? Every one acquainted with the ancient state of England, and with the condition of the Hottentots, must be aware, that no just comparison can be instituted between our peasantry under the feudal system, and the present state of the Hottentots. But, lest this incidental allusion should be seized by interested individuals, for purposes inimical to the cause of the aborigines of South Africa, I shall be excused for making a few remarks on the subject.

The ancient feudal government, as it existed in Great Britain in former times, and, still more, as it was seen in the Highlands of Scotland till a late period, had much in it of the patriarchal character. The chief, in the

midst of his people, was brought to regard them as his kinsmen ; and, in his relation to them, he sustained the complicated characters of their judge, their protector, their leader ; and they, in return, regarded him with a proud and even a filial reverence.

We look in vain for any of the advantages of this form of government in South Africa. The Hottentots are not sufficiently numerous to inspire those that rule over them with fear. They have not the advantages enjoyed by a numerous tribe, even when subject to a tyrant—their oppressors are more numerous than they themselves are*. The peasantry of England, in the feudal times, whatever might be their condition as individuals, had all the importance derived from numbers and strength. On this principle, their chiefs found it necessary to cultivate their love and esteem ; and even, when those chiefs at any time sacrificed their true interests to the rapacity of their dispositions, there was still some motive left to industry.

The peasant knew that, if he could conceal himself

* Any objection to the freedom of the Hottentots, arising from an apprehension of danger to the colony, is too ludicrous to deserve a serious answer. There is no class of people in that colony on whose loyalty more dependence can be placed. The boors have been in rebellion, and the slaves have been in a state of insurrection ; and both have been put down by the Hottentots. The farmers may again be in rebellion, and the slaves may again be in a state of insurrection ; but from the Hottentots such a danger is not likely to arise. Independently of the condition of the Hottentots, the very elements composing the Hottentot character are sufficient securities against the probability of any bad consequences arising from the act which confers upon that injured people their just rights. There is a mildness in the character of the Hottentots—a hereditary reverence for authority—a kind of constitutional loyalty, that furnishes sufficient security for their fidelity.

for one twelvemonth from his feudal lord, he might enjoy his earnings in a state of freedom. The Hottentot has no city of refuge provided for him.

I advance to meet the abettors of the present system upon their own grounds. For argument's sake, I shall allow the Hottentots to be as idle and as worthless as they, from selfish principles, represent them ; but I maintain that these evils arise out of their condition ; and that it is preposterous—that it argues a total ignorance of human nature, or some strange obliquity of mind, to suppose that the people can be industrious without a single motive to industry. I am happy to avail myself of the support of a great name on this question :—

“ Order and good government,” says Dr. Adam Smith, “ and along with them the liberty and security of individuals, were in this manner established in cities, at a time when the occupiers of land in the country were exposed to every sort of violence. But men in this defenceless state naturally content themselves with their necessary subsistence ; because to acquire more might only tempt the injustice of their oppressors. On the contrary, when they are secure of enjoying the fruits of their industry, they naturally exert it to better their condition, and to acquire not only the necessaries, but the conveniencies and elegancies of life.

“ That industry, therefore, which aims at something more than necessary subsistence, was established in cities long before it was commonly practised by the occupiers of land in the country. If, in the hands of a poor cultivator, oppressed with the servitude of villainage, some little stock should accumulate, he would naturally conceal it with great care from his master, to whom it would otherwise have belonged, and take the

first opportunity of running away to a town. The law was, at that time, so indulgent to the inhabitants of towns, and so desirous of diminishing the authority of the lords over those of the country, that if he could conceal himself there, from the pursuit of his lord, for a year, he was free for ever. Whatever stock, therefore, accumulated in the hands of the industrious part of the inhabitants of the country, naturally took refuge in cities, as the only sanctuaries in which it could be secure to the person that acquired it."

In conformity with the plan proposed in this article, I submit, with deference, a few observations on the views of the colonial government, as they are unfolded in the letter of Sir John Cradock, (now Lord Howden), to Mr. Campbell *. It is observed in his Excellency's letter, " that the disinclination to increase, or even maintain the [missionary] institutions already established in this colony, is almost universal; and that the general alarm and outcry is, that if they are permitted to enlarge or disseminate, the most fatal injury will ensue to the agriculture and sustenance of the community."

It is obvious that this almost universal disinclination and general alarm arise simply from this, that every landdrost, heemraad, farmer, and, in fact, master of every description, whether English or Dutch, is naturally desirous of obtaining servants at a cheap rate. This desire being, therefore, universal on the part of masters, the outcry is, of course, general; and, since these institutions are supposed to prevent masters from obtaining so many, and such cheap servants, as they otherwise would, they are thus necessarily the objects of dislike. I apprehend, however, that his Excellency,

* See APPENDIX, No. IV.

when making use of the terms "universal" and "general," had reference solely to the opinion of landdrosts, and farmers, and other masters; and not to that of the servants, who might be equally competent judges of the advantages of the institution.

If the above be a correct view of the case, we come, I think, fairly to this conclusion; that the universality of the outcry against the institutions, on the part of masters, certainly affords no arguments whatever against, but, I should infer, rather in favour of the institutions, because it, in some measure, proves that these institutions did afford some protection to the servants against the exactions of their masters. It is also observed in his Excellency's letter, "that if the labours in the field at the proper season of the year are not cheerfully accorded to all the surrounding farmers," &c. On this I would remark, that if it be a fact that there is a scarcity of labour, it is beyond the possibility of an institution, in whatever way conducted, to afford labourers *to all*. But in point of fact, the missionary institutions, so far from operating as a disadvantage to the farmers, have proved of the greatest service to the neighbourhoods in which they are situated. While they have elevated the characters of the Hottentots and raised their value as servants, the accommodation they have furnished to the farmers in their vicinity have considerably raised the value of their lands. In illustration of this subject, I am happy to avail myself of the authority of the Commissioners of Inquiry. Referring to the Hottentots at our missionary institutions, they remark:—
 "Their services, in harvest-time, have thus been found more valuable to the neighbouring farmers, than where whole families subsist throughout the year as indigent

retainers." What, then, may I be permitted to ask, would, under these circumstances, appear to be the line of policy most beneficial to the colony? May I not say, that it is clearly the interest of government not to listen to the clamour of those who may, unfortunately for themselves, have been amongst the number of masters who, in consequence of the paucity of labourers, have not procured so many servants as they might desire; but to protect and cherish all well-conducted institutions, and thereby induce the labourers to increase their number? Any government conducted upon enlightened and liberal principles will not assist one class of its subjects in depressing another, but, passing by all distinctions arising from the arrogant pretensions of such as may wish to have exclusive privileges, or a chartered monopoly of the flesh and bones of any part of their fellow-creatures, will take its stand on the broad principles of truth and justice, and will, from this eminence, hold out its incentives to virtue only, and its discouragements to vice. Make the Hottentots free, and give them a fair price for their labour, their masters will have double the work that they obtain at present, and this increase of value to their masters will treble their value to the state. It may be safely affirmed that the Hottentots who reside at the institutions, generally speaking, do more than double the work that is done by those who are constantly among the farmers. I have in my eye, at this moment, a farm on which the proprietor keeps forty slaves and thirty Hottentots, and no one, who is acquainted with farming, as it is carried on in England, would hesitate to say that all the labour of this farm could be effected by twenty English servants. It is allowed that one Englishman will do more than twice the work

of one Irishman in his own country, and that the latter will do twice the work in England he was in the habit of doing in Ireland. To what are we to attribute this change but to a difference of circumstances? In England, the labourer has a sufficiency of wages to procure the nourishment required to support the physical strength necessary to hard labour; and he has the fruits of his industry secured to him. In Ireland, those advantages, which are the very sinews of industry, are denied.

While the following passage from Malthus exhibits, in a condensed form, the substance of all the arguments contained in this article, it accounts, at the same time, for the real cause of the degradation of the Hottentots, and points to the only means by which they can be elevated in the scale of being, and rendered more useful to the state:

“Of all the causes,” observes that able and distinguished writer, “which tend to generate prudential habits among the lower classes of society, the most essential is, unquestionably, civil liberty.” “No people can be much accustomed to form plans for the future, who do not feel assured that their industrious exertions, while fair and honourable, will be allowed to have free scope, and that the property they either possess or may acquire, will be secured to them by a known code of laws impartially administered; but it has been found by experience, that civil liberty cannot be secured without political liberty, consequently political liberty becomes almost equally essential; and in addition to its being necessary in this point of view, its obvious tendency to teach the lower classes of society to respect themselves, by obliging the higher classes to respect them, must

contribute greatly to aid all the good effects of civil liberty."

It is in the next place observed in Lord Howden's letter:—"If idleness is allowed to prevail," &c. On this I shall only remark, that it is an utter impossibility, that, under the present system of colonial legislation, this class of men should be otherwise than idle, since they are but just emerging from the indolent habits of a nomade life, with a taste still to be formed for the decencies of life. Yet we have no reason to fear the most impartial scrutiny, nor to shrink from a comparison of the Hottentots at the Missionary Institutions, with those among the Boors. Let the Hottentots of Uitenhage be compared with those of Graaff-Reinet and Somerset. The contrast between them is so great, that an officer of the Cape regiment lately apologized for taking a greater proportion of Hottentots from Bethelsdorp than the numbers belonging to the institution justified, by affirming that they were a different class of beings—that the Bethelsdorp Hottentots became excellent soldiers with very little training, while they could scarcely make anything of those they got from Graaff-Reinet and Somerset. There is certainly, beyond comparison, more industry among the Hottentots at our institutions, than among those with the farmers. The missionaries have proofs of this every day, in the difficulties they find in getting such as may have been mostly among the farmers to labour at the institutions. This difference of character is easily accounted for. The Hottentots at the institutions, notwithstanding their oppressed condition, have stimulants to exertion which the Hottentots with the Boors do not possess; for what have the Hottentots of the colony, not attached to the

institutions, to look to? What motives can they have to industry? For instance, can they acquire property?—it is impossible! Robbed of their country, they are even incapacitated from holding land in it; the only property they are known even in appearance to possess, is cattle, and for this they have no security, because they have no option allowed but that of changing a master. On the other hand, the Hottentots attached to the institutions have some motives to industry; they have some security, that they shall enjoy the property they may acquire, and, therefore, they are more industrious. But in the degree that they are deprived of full security of property and civil liberty, it may be confidently asserted that the Hottentots will remain less industrious and less serviceable to the community; and it is evident that no exertion of the missionaries, by instruction or example, can ever overcome, though they may slightly check, that effect which the disabilities, under which even the Hottentots at our institutions are still placed, have in generating habits of indolence and improvidence.

In proceeding to examine further Lord Howden's remarks, we meet this statement of the views of government:—"It would seem very injudicious to allot any considerable portion of land to those institutions, that would render them independent of connections with their neighbours, and allow them to look upon all around them with indifference;" and it is then subsequently added, that "by the practice of 'trades and handicrafts,' they would acquire money, and have the means to purchase not only subsistence, but the decent comforts of life." The former and latter part of these statements of the views of government, appear to me in

direct opposition. First of all, it is stated, that land is not to be allotted to the Hottentots, but still they are to be encouraged to engage in trades and handicrafts. Now it is well known that the only property a Hottentot, on first joining an institution, can value, or even desire, is cattle, and that, of course, he can only have by possessing land ; if the government, therefore, deem it injudicious to allot any land to Hottentots, excepting for the support of the more aged and infirm, how is a missionary to excite that Hottentot to exertion ? To give him instruction in a trade is, in a great degree, hopeless, for what is the motive that would urge him to industry in this trade, even if the influence of the missionary should induce him to acquire it ? It can be, of course, the possession of property only ; and he cannot have, at first, any views or ideas of property, except as connected with cattle, or land and water, by which he might support them. In taking away, therefore, this spring of action, this grand motive to industry, the acquisition of landed property and cattle, we may trace the almost insuperable difficulties, which the missionaries have experienced in their exertions to overcome, in an extensive degree, the indolent habits of the people ; and hence it is that the government have themselves defeated their intention, of discouraging idleness, of inducing the Hottentots to practise handicrafts and trades, and of rearing a supply of labourers.

. The recent spring of industry imparted to the Hottentots at our missionary institutions within the colony, furnishes no objection to this argument. When it is recollected that their exertions were greatly stimulated by the hope imparted to them, that they would do away with the objections of their enemies to an amelioration

of their condition, and render the British government propitious to their claims, the improvements which have been described give additional force to the reasons we have employed on this part of our subject. It has been successfully shown by all the experiments which have been made in South Africa, that the Hottentots are as capable of being excited to industry as any other class of people, when they have the prospect of procuring, by the fruits of their labour, the objects of desire ; and the more nearly these objects are placed within their reach, the more we elevate their characters, increase their value to the government, and facilitate the improvement of the colony.

Lest it should be alleged that the colonial government is dealt unfairly with in giving the sentiments of an individual, however distinguished, as an illustration of the nature of the colonial system, we subjoin the following letter from Earl Bathurst to his Excellency Lord Charles Somerset. The occasion of this letter has been already explained in the Theopolis case. (See page 270.)

“ Downing Street, London, Oct. 12, 1825.

“ MY LORD,

“ I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency’s dispatch of the 12th of July last, inclosing a communication from the landdrost of Albany, in which it is suggested that a strip of land situated between the missionary establishment at Theopolis and the late Lieut.-Colonel Fraser’s estate, might be given to that institution ; and I have to acquaint your Excellency that, if the missionaries should be willing to accept a grant of the land in question, upon the condition

of not further extending their possessions, by purchase or otherwise, without the leave of your Excellency's government, I shall be prepared to sanction the grant of this land to them.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ My Lord,

“ Your Excellency's most obedient,

“ humble servant,

(Signed)

“ BATHURST.”

In this letter we have the origin of our colonial policy. The most ignorant and selfish of the boors represent to the landdrost that it would not be good for the colony that the Hottentots should be allowed to purchase land ; the landdrost adopts their sentiments, and transmits them to the governor ; the governor presents them to his Majesty's Secretary for the Colonies ; his Majesty's Principal Secretary for the Colonies supposes, as the recommendation comes from the landdrost, and is approved by the governor, it must be deserving of the sanction of his Majesty's government ; and thus it becomes a part of the colonial policy. It is melancholy to observe how superior minds in this manner become the dupes of the most vulgar prejudices.

We talk much, in the present day, of the light which philosophy has thrown upon all subjects connected with the progress of civil society and government ; but, surely, things might have gone on in this way if Adam Smith, Fergusson, Malthus, Ricardo, &c., had never blotted paper. How foreign the partiality of this policy to the principles of the British constitution ; and, further, how impolitic ! What can a degraded race of

labourers be but worthless members of the community? How total a forgetfulness is here evinced of, probably, the best known truth respecting society,—that the strength, the welfare of a country is mainly dependent on the character and habits of its labouring classes !

Any fears arising from any sudden change of property which may be hurtful to the interests of the colony, from adopting the measures recommended in the preceding chapter, are without the slightest foundation. No sudden alteration in the landed property of the country is to be apprehended from this source. Under the most favourable circumstances the great body of the Hottentots cannot be in any other condition than that of labourers for centuries to come. Individuals among the Hottentots, under a more genial system, may, in thirty or forty years, rise to possess little farms, and they may be able to leave the property acquired by their industry to their children : but no one acquainted with the state of property in Europe can for a moment imagine, that any fears of this nature should paralyse the hand of government, so as to make it withhold from the Hottentots their natural rights. It would be sufficiently ridiculous for any one to propose to the British Parliament that it should pass an act disqualifying the weavers of Manchester or Glasgow from holding land, lest they should dispossess the present landed proprietors and the nobility, and engross to themselves the wealth and honours of the country. In free countries you may see individuals rising from humble conditions to possess property ; and you may find among our nobility individuals whose great-grandfathers were mechanics : but such instances are extremely rare ;

and it will be allowed that England owes much of its industry and its glory as a country to the laws which secure the poor against the oppressions of the rich, and which leave the immunities and honours of the state open to fair and honourable competition.

CHAPTER XIX.

Appeal to the British Government, claiming for the Aborigines of South Africa, liberal Institutions, and just Laws.—Evil effects of uncontrolled Power on the character of those invested with it.—Advantages resulting to a country from an impartial Administration of Justice.—New Courts of Justice at the Cape.—Their defects as regards the Aborigines.—Advantages which would result to the Colonists generally from the elevation of the Hottentot race.—Remarks of the Commissioners of Inquiry on the Condition of the Coloured Population.—The British Government more deeply implicated than the Dutch in the oppression of the Natives of South Africa.—Liberal views of Governor Janssens in regard to the Hottentots.—The Hottentots acknowledged by the British Government and by the Colonial Authorities to be “a free people.”—Appeal to British Justice and Humanity in their behalf.

IF the British government would contribute effectually to the prosperity of South Africa, let them at last do justice to the aborigines of the country, by imparting to them liberal institutions, and just and equal laws.

Bad laws generate bad morals, and good laws generate good morals, on the same principle that every plant produces its own species; and there is no greater obstruction to the improvement of a people, than bad laws in the hands of men who only think of employing them to enrich themselves at the expense of those whom they oppress.

Whilst the laws, the institutions, and customs of a country are the best indices to its genius and character, by

the permanent influence which they exercise over both, we are justified in regarding them as the great arbiters of its morals and destiny. While equitable laws and their impartial administration elevate the standard of morals, raise the tone of thinking, exalt the character of a country, and increase the patriotism of a people, they generate the principles and love of justice in the heart of a great and effective part of the population. Could we analyze the human mind, and resolve it into its component parts, we might find the decisions of our courts of justice at home occupying no inconsiderable place among the elements forming our national character. It is absurd to talk of patriotism in a country where men are slaves, or to expect truth and equity among the generality of a people, if they are not embodied in the institutions of a country, and in the character and decisions of its judges.

Agriculture and commerce can never flourish, unless private property is respected, and the laws which guard the possessions of individuals are the first principles of industry.

Where all the avenues to preferment are closed, where there is no prize to ambition, and the mind is without wholesome stimulants, there can be no energy in the national character. Different degrees of rank and office are necessary in all well-constituted societies; but laws, which are made for favouring one part of the community, and depressing another, give rise to, and increase those moral obliquities which destroy the proportion and mar the face of society. Those invidious distinctions, by which one class of men are enabled to trample upon another, give rise to pride, arrogance, and an oppressive spirit in the privileged order,

while they repress every thing noble and praiseworthy in the oppressed. Where the privileged class is but a fractional part of the community, the evil is partial in its operation ; but when that class includes all the proprietors of the soil, the farmers, and the merchants, society is divided into two classes exhibiting all the modifications of vice arising out of that unnatural condition.

The secluded condition of the greater part of the South African farmers, the power thrown into their hands by the weakness of government, their situation in the midst of a population of slaves and Hottentots over whom they can tyrannize without control, is as unfavourable to the civilization of the farmers themselves, as it is to the happiness and improvement of those under them.

The establishment of law, forms an important era in the civilization of a people, and the statute which prevents the superior from oppressing or tyrannizing over his domestic, is as favourable to the humanity of the one, as it is to the happiness of the other.

While it is now universally admitted that it is the natural tendency of the exercise of uncontrolled authority to harden the heart, extinguish the moral sense, and give birth to every species of crimes and calamities, it is evident that the wealthy part of the community are elevated on the scale of being by the effective legislative enactments by which the poor are protected from oppression. The barbarizing effects of uncontrolled authority on minds in least danger of being corrupted by its influence, may be seen in every page of the history of human nature, and is well illustrated in the invaluable tract of Bishop Porteus on the effects of Christianity on the temporal concerns of mankind. After

having portrayed with glowing indignation, the horrid condition of those in a state of servitude among the polished and civilized Greeks and Romans, we find the following judicious remark :

“ These are the effects which the possession of unlimited power over our species has actually produced, and which (unless counteracted and subdued by religious principle) it has always a natural tendency to produce, even in the most benevolent and best cultivated minds. When such is the general effect, what must it be in a colony where the lower order of people are considered as inferior beings ?”

It has been justly remarked, that the noblest, the most elevated distinction of a country, is a fair administration of justice. Nothing can be done to improve and to elevate a people, if the administration of justice is corrupt ; but to insure a pure administration of justice in a country, it must be accessible to all classes of the community. In a state of society where there is one law for the rich and another for the poor, and the sanctions of the law are borrowed to render the poor the victims of oppression, moral distinctions are confounded, and the names of virtue and vice come to be regarded as exchangeable terms*.

* The following anecdote may be adduced as an illustration of the state of the aborigines in South Africa. Conversing one day on the state of the Hottentots, with Sir John Truter, the late chief-justice of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Sir John exclaimed, “ Well, Dr. Philip, I am now sitting on the chair in which I have been first made acquainted with the state of the Hottentots.”

This observation was repeated in the hearing of Mr. Pringle, now secretary to the Anti-Slavery Society, who happened accidentally to enter the room at the moment at which it was first made. It must be obvious that, if the Hottentots had had any recognized rights, their

Sully, in his Memoirs, after having described the corruption and profligacy of public men in France, at the time at which he was placed at the head of the finances; and after having described his success in bringing delinquents to justice, remarks, "Mankind now began to give all those strokes of art the name that they deserved; and those unlawful gains, which so long had impoverished France and enriched the officers of the revenue, were treated without ceremony as robbery and rapine; and honesty began to show her head in a sanctuary where she had never resided before*."

The slave-trade was unpopular with many people in England before the legislature declared it to be piracy; but no intelligent person will venture to affirm, that this public tribute to justice and humanity did not increase the national abhorrence against the detestable traffic thus stigmatized. The public are so accustomed to form their estimate of a crime by its success, or punishment, that they seldom view it through any other medium.

I am happy to hear of the new court of justice which has been given to the Cape colony. I expect much from the independence of the judges; but, however equitable the sentences of the judges may be, if the protection of the law is not extended to the coloured population their decisions can never impress upon the public mind the immutable distinctions between right and wrong.

While the administration of justice is confined to one actual condition could not have been unknown to a person who had, for many years successively, filled the first offices under the government of the Cape of Good Hope, and who had long been regarded as the first law authority of the colony.

* Sully's Memoirs, vol. iv., page 106.

particular class of the community only, however that administration may be regarded for its equity, it is nothing better than the equity of a party of Bedouin Arabs, who make an equal distribution of the spoil they have taken from the unprotected caravan ; or the honour of highwaymen, who deal justly by each other, while they combine to rob every defenceless traveller. The legislative enactment which breaks the chains of the oppressed aborigines, and raises the standard of morals in the colony, will prove the most effectual measure which can be adopted to improve all classes of the community.

If the existing invidious distinctions, which place the natives in their present degraded state, were removed, the spring of industry which would be imparted, by this means, to the Hottentot nation, would soon be felt as a powerful stimulus to exertion among all classes of the people and in every part of the colony. While the farmers would be able to do the same quantity of work with half the number of hands they now keep about them, the example of those Hottentots, who might be rising to wealth and independence, would provoke to emulation the most indolent of the boors. While the boors of this colony are surrounded with so much idleness and wretchedness, any attempt to elevate them will prove ineffectual ; and the plan recommended, is the only one by which this idleness can be cured, and this scene of wretchedness removed. The different members of a state have been beautifully represented by the members of the human body : it may be truly said, if one member suffers, all the members of the body suffer ; and, if one member is diseased, all the body is affected by its sympathy with this particular member.

In allusion to this figure, the Hottentots may be called the feet; but I may be allowed to ask the question,—if the feet are in a state of mortification, what becomes of the health of the body? Can the sons of a farmer be industrious—can his daughters be uncontaminated—can his house be clean, or can it be any thing but filthy—and can the state of his family be any thing but disgusting, while he continues surrounded with a naked, filthy, and degraded race of human beings? The filth and indolence of the Hottentots have become proverbial; but these, like the other vices of which they have been accused, arise out of their situation. When a people are oppressed, and miserably poor, they are invariably a degraded people; and indolence and filth are the inseparable attendants of dejection.

The Hottentots, generally speaking, have no motives to industry: the lawful fruits of their labour are not secured to them; they are robbed, and cheated, and oppressed, in every possible way; and the filthiness of their huts and persons are no more than the natural consequences arising from the state of mental depression in which they are held. Cheerfulness and cleanliness are much more nearly allied than is generally imagined; and the Hottentots at our institutions, who have acquired some property, and have been enabled to build for themselves good houses, are quite as cleanly in their persons and in their houses as the colonists in general. While the elevation of the Hottentots to their just rights would be of the most essential service to the families of the farmers in general, it would have the most beneficial effects upon the industry and resources of the colony at large. By the elevation of the labouring classes, respect is conferred upon labour: it is stripped of the degrading

associations connected with it while performed by slaves only ; and such a change in the sentiments of the colonists must be followed by the happiest effects on their industry. When the Hottentots are raised to the rank of free men, in lieu of lazy superintendents, engaged in active exertions for a few days at the seasons of sowing and reaping, or in hunting excursions, the colonists and their families, like their industrious ancestors, will shortly be converted into useful farmers. The general course of daily occupation throughout the colony—of bawling out to a few wretched Hottentots to do all they require, which is so often noticed to the disgrace of the colonists, will gradually be exchanged for those habits by which the several members of the colonial farmers' families will be industriously employed in all the labours of the farm.

I have, in a former passage, shown, that the oppressions of the Hottentots have been greatly increased, in consequence of the abolition of the foreign slave-trade ; and it is evident, from the rapid increase of the colonial population, and the natural result of that increase, an increasing demand for labourers, that the condition of that unfortunate people must every day get worse, unless their chains are speedily and entirely broken, and they are put in possession of the blessings of freedom as well as the name. While the present system continues, it is in vain to hope for any improvement in the character of the Hottentots, in the morals of the boors, or in the social habits of their families. The peculiar vices of all ranks of the inhabitants are the vices of the system ; and, though they may survive it, they cannot be expected to die before it.

In corroboration of the statements given in the pre-

ceding pages of this volume in relation to the oppressed state of the natives, and of my reasonings on the impolicy of retaining them in their present condition, I am happy to avail myself of the following extracts from the Report of his Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry.

“ In the case of the coloured classes, whether Hottentots or negroes, we regret to observe that the rate of their remuneration has been generally very inadequate throughout the colony.

“ The prize negroes indentured for fourteen years may, in general, be considered to be as great a source of profit to their masters as slaves, and the undue advantage that has been confirmed to the masters by law of claiming the gratuitous services of the children of prize negresses, from the age of five to eighteen years, has tended, in many instances, to perpetuate the advantages that have been derived from the servitude of this class. It has been customary with many persons holding indentures to hire out the labour of prize negresses in the same manner as that of the slaves.

“ The Hottentots contracted in the service of the boors are chiefly resident in the eastern province. They are usually engaged upon very low wages, and retained in a condition very unfavourable to their improvement. From weakness of constitution they are rarely fit for the labours of agriculture; but their knowledge of the country, and their pastoral habits, render them extremely useful to the boors in the capacity of herdsmen; and the same observation is applicable to Bosjesmen, who are in the service of the boors in the frontier districts.

“ The mixed race, who are the offspring of the colonists by Hottentot mothers, labour under the same

disadvantages, which have led to settlements being formed by them beyond the confines of the colony and the influence of the boors.

“ In considering the advantages derived from the gratuitous services of prize negroes, and those that equally result to the grazier from the employment of Hottentots and of other native classes, without trouble to themselves or adequate remuneration to their servants, we think that, in both cases, the servant-tax of ten shillings may be equitably imposed; and if a greater degree of protection should be given to the interests of those classes, and should lead to their acquirement of a higher reward for their services until enabled to form establishments for themselves, the tax, as in the case of European servants, would naturally constitute a deduction from the higher rate of wages which are readily to be obtained where a free competition is encouraged. The indolence of the Dutch farmers, induced by the employment of slaves in the more cultivated portions of the colony, and the facility with which they obtain Hottentots in the grazing districts, have proved a great obstacle to the improvement of the colony; and, as the influx of European settlers has of late years afforded some examples to the colonists of more industrious habits, it may tend further to call forth the industry of the boors to impose a tax on hired servants. The ordinary labours of agriculture may thus, in time, be performed by their own families, which are often numerous, and a valuable accession would thus be gained to the productive classes throughout the colony, while the farmer would relieve himself from the operation of a tax on a class of servants who would still be available to him on extraordinary occasions.

“The law which has compelled the Hottentots to enter into service, and has bestowed to the employer a right to the services of their children from eight to eighteen years of age, if born on their estates, has tended to retard the improvement of the Hottentots, and the benefits to be derived to the colony at large, and to those districts in particular in which they are settled in communities. Their services in harvest-time have thus been found more valuable to the neighbouring farmers than when whole families subsist throughout the year as indigent retainers.

“The transmission of mails has been accelerated by the attention that has been paid to this object by the British administrations, and by the increased remuneration that has been made to the post-holders on the eastern road ; but the arrangement is very defective, both as it is removed from the direct control of the post-master-general in Cape Town, and as the persons employed to carry the mails (who are generally Hottentots) are very inadequately paid and provided by the boors, being frequently contracted to them for the performance of this very laborious duty for wages that, in some instances, have not exceeded two rix-dollars, or three shillings per month, and are compelled to ride with the mails, in all seasons and at all hours, with very little clothing. It has also been customary with some of the landdrosts to consider this employment of post-riders as a public duty, which the Hottentots of the missionary institutions have been bound to render, and for the performance of which they have been required to relinquish other and more profitable employment. In some instances they have been required to perform this service gratuitously.”

It is admitted by His Majesty's Commissioners, in

the above extract from their Reports, that the coloured classes throughout the colony, including the Hottentots, the prize negroes, the Caffers, the Bechuanas, and the Bushmen, have not an adequate remuneration for their labour ; that the low wages on which they are retained is a great source of profit to their employers ; that, at the missionary institutions, Hottentots have been compelled to serve as post-riders, for which they have received inadequate, and sometimes no, wages at all ; and that, to perform these services, they have been required to relinquish more profitable employments ; that the law which compels the Hottentots, or other coloured people, to enter into service, has bestowed to the employer a right to the services of the children, from eight to eighteen years of age, if born on their estates ; and they add, in respect to this state of things, that it has tended to retard the improvement of the Hottentots, and the benefit to be derived to the colony at large, and to those districts, in particular, in which they are settled in communities. It will be remarked, that the concessions made in these extracts are all confirmatory of my statements, and that they are all favourable to the arguments now employed in favour of this class of people.

As an apology for the Commissioners, for not having entered more into detail on this subject, it is but fair to state, that the extracts in question are taken from the Reports on the administration of the government and the finances of the colony ; and appear as if they had been introduced in an incidental way only in connection with these subjects. The government at home has not yet thought fit to publish their full Reports on the coloured population. On the reasons his Majesty's government may have for the backwardness shown in

this instance, I shall not now speculate; but it is to be hoped, that the Reports of the Commissioners on those subjects will still be forthcoming, and that they will be given to the public as they came from the hands of the Commissioners.

In the absence of those Reports, which have been so long expected from the Colonial office, and which are still kept back, we shall avail ourselves of the facts put into our hands by this document, in the prosecution of the object of our present labours. The profitable and unjust monopoly of the labours of the natives, the compulsory service to which they are liable, and the cruel and desecrating regulations which give their employer a power over their offspring, are here admitted. The law which has *compelled* the Hottentot to enter into service, and has *bestowed* on the employer a right to the services of the children, &c., is here recognized; and these admissions are accompanied with the following important concession,—That these compulsory laws have tended to retard the improvement of the Hottentots, and the benefits to be derived to the colony at large, and to those districts, in particular, in which they are settled in communities. In the same extracts we meet with similar sentiments expressed in another form.

The indolence of the Dutch farmers, induced by the employment of slaves, and the facility with which they obtain (or, properly speaking, compel) the services of the Hottentots in the grazing districts, have proved a great obstacle to the improvement of the colony. From the great profit which colonists derive from the labour of Hottentots and prize negroes, the Commissioners propose that a *servant-tax* should be imposed on each of

them, to be paid by their employers. As the concessions in the above extracts, describing the condition of the coloured population, appear to have been introduced for the purpose of showing the equity of the proposed tax, we have no right to suppose that this is the only remedy the Commissioners have proposed to his Majesty's government, (although it is the only one hinted at in this place,) or that they proposed anything more in it than a temporary advantage to the government, till such time as some legislative enactment should be promulgated to release them from their cruel sufferings. His Majesty's Commissioners could never for a moment suppose that the British government would sanction such a cruel monopoly of the services of the natives of South Africa, that they might increase the colonial revenue by a tax of ten shillings, levied upon the masters, to allow them to compel Hottentots and prize negroes, &c. to serve them on their own terms.

While I acquit the Commissioners of ever having entertained such an opinion, I confess I am not a little surprised at the doubt expressed by them in the following clause of the sentence on which we are now commenting:—"If a greater degree of protection should be given to the interests of those classes," &c. Could they, for a moment, be in doubt, whether the government at home would feel the slightest hesitation in promptly relieving the natives of South Africa from their cruel and unmerited oppressions? To suppose such a thing possible would be to suppose the government at home in a much lower state of degeneracy than the most selfish of the colonists.

Though the colonists have powerful motives for the continuance of this system, I have never met one of

them who attempted to defend it, and few of them who have not acknowledged its injustice and cruelty ; but to suppose that the English government would permit such a system, when brought under their notice, would not only be to suppose that our statesmen could be wicked without motive, but, also, that they would be guilty of the egregious folly of extending their protection to a system which had been proved, on the showing of the Commissioners of Inquiry, to be inimical to the best interests of the colony. Have not the Commissioners, in two passages of these short extracts, given it as their decided opinion, that the low rate of wages allowed to the natives, the compulsory services to which they are liable, and the manner in which the great ties of nature, between the natives and their children, are dissolved by the strong hand of the law, have retarded not only the improvement of the natives themselves, but also the improvement of the colony ?

Although the weakness of the Dutch government might compel it to wink at the manner in which the Hottentots were oppressed by the colonists, that government was not so deeply implicated in the oppressions of that people as the English government has been. Under the old government, a feeble protection was afforded to the oppressed ; but, the oppressions at which the Dutch government connived have, under the English government, obtained the sanction of law ; and that power, under which the Hottentots, at one time, had reason to expect a greater degree of liberty, has only added to the number and weight of their chains. On this subject I am happy to avail myself of the following extracts from the Reports of his Majesty's Commissioners :—“ Upon the first surrender of the colony

to his Majesty's arms, in the year 1795, the powers of the government that had been exercised by the governor and council were vested in the British governors alone; and although the general policy, by which the measures of the Dutch East India Company had been regulated, underwent an immediate and very beneficial change, yet the same forms of administration were continued until the colony was given up in the year 1803, to the government of the Batavian republic, in pursuance of the treaty of Amiens. In the month of March that year, a commissioner from the Batavian republic arrived in the colony, with full power to accept the transfer of it from the English authorities. In a proclamation dated 1st March, 1803, it was declared by him, 'That thenceforth the colony of the Cape of Good Hope was no longer to be dependent upon the government at Batavia, or upon any commercial body whatever, but that the inhabitants were to know no other government than that which the Batavian people had chosen for themselves.'

"The commissioner appears to have been invested with power of making new laws and regulations for the administration and government of the colony, which were published from time to time, and have acquired the force of law, although they were not recognized by the government of the Batavian republic, who, it seems, had reserved to themselves the right of rejecting the regulations, and embodying such as they approved into a charter or constitution of government.

"Sufficient time had not elapsed before the capture of the colony in the year 1806, for the preparation of such an act, or its promulgation in the colony; but the regulations that were framed and published by the

commissioner during his residence in it, and provisionally enforced by Governor Janssens, and the council exercising the executive powers of the government, embraced the several departments, and especially those for the collection and receipt of revenue; the administration of justice; the duties of the fiscal, then designated by the name of 'procureur-general,' or 'attorney-general;' the ecclesiastical functions and municipal institutions in Cape Town, and in the districts. Although no positive enactment was made public respecting the question of slavery, and the condition and treatment of slaves, Hottentots, and people of colour, yet certain declarations and opinions of the principal members of the government were recorded, from which it is only just to infer that the most liberal views and intentions were entertained towards them, and that they would have been carried into effect whenever the government felt itself strong enough to assert them with success."

Previous to the surrender of the Cape to the English, the Hottentots had been cruelly treated by the boors; but by the government which then existed, they had always been recognized as a free people in its proclamations; and in as far as that government itself was concerned they were, in many instances, treated as such.

In a proclamation of General Janssens, of 1803, having enlarged upon the demoralizing effect of the manners of the slaves upon the minds of the youth in the families of the colonists, he strongly urges them to substitute, in their families, to have charge of their children, in the place of slaves, *free* hired Hottentots.

In the same year, 1803, we have one decisive fact, in a proclamation of General Janssens, which furnishes a contrast between the Dutch and English governments, not much to the honour of our own country. In that year a disease had become prevalent in Cape Town, which required the interference and aid of government. That the public might sustain as little loss as possible, a plan was proposed to assess the parties, and to make them refund to the colonial treasury the money which had been expended in the means employed for their restoration to health. The Europeans were called upon to pay the expenses of their own cure; the masters of the slaves had to pay for their cure; and the government bore the expense of the cure of the Hottentots. This last measure was determined upon for this reason, that there was no method of compelling the Hottentots to pay the expenses of their own cure, but by disposing of them as servants, a scheme which, it is stated, was liable to many abuses, and contrary to the then acknowledged freedom of the Hottentot people. Contrary to the plan which is now acted upon by the British government, which consigns every Hottentot to prison who is without a pass, and keeps him there till a master comes and pays the expenses charged for his maintenance, prison-fees, and other items, &c., the governor, having discharged the claims of the Hottentots on this occasion, ordered them to be conducted across the Salt River, to pursue their journies to their respective tribes in the interior.

The following extract from the instructions to the landdrost of the Cape district, in 1809, shows the views of the British government at that period on this subject:—

“The original natives of this country, the Hottentots, must be considered and treated as a free people, who have a lawful abode in the colony, and their persons and property, and possessions ought, for that reason, to be protected, the same as those of other free people.”

In a pamphlet, published a few years ago, under the sanction of the British government, entitled, *The State of the Nation*, it is stated that “the labour of the district of Uitenhage is carried on by *free* hired Hottentots.”

It being proposed to his Excellency Sir Rufane Donkin, in 1820, at a public meeting of the English settlers lately arrived in South Africa, that the Hottentots at Theopolis should be compelled to make roads in the new district of Albany for their convenience, the acting governor declared publicly that the Hottentots were a “free people;” and that the government had no more right to compel them to work for the settlers than it had to compel the settlers to work for the Hottentots.

When Colonel Bird, the colonial secretary, was at Uitenhage, on his last journey into the interior of the colony, the wife of a Dutch boer presented a complaint to him against Mr. Schmit, the Moravian missionary at Enon, charging him with having refused to compel a Hottentot to hire himself to her. The complaint was preferred in the presence of the Rev. Mr. Hallbeck, the superintendent of the Moravian missions in South Africa; and, in answer to that complaint, the colonial secretary declared, in the presence of the above-named gentleman and others, that the authorities of the country had no more right to compel the Hottentots to labour for the farmers, than they had to compel the farmers to serve the Hottentots.