

**A FEW PRACTICAL
ARGUMENTS
AGAINST THE
THEORY OF EMIGRATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649322046

A few practical arguments against the theory of emigration by F. B. Head

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Cover @ 2017

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By CAPTAIN F. B. HEAD.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXXVIII.

278.

LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWE,
Stamford-street.



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THAT Emigration would afford an easy, natural, and effectual remedy for an overplus of population was, for a long time, a statement much too agreeable and convenient to be denied; and, accordingly, on its foundation a beautiful theory has been erected, which was to give us for ever as much elbow-room as we could desire: however, when its minute arrangements were all completed, just as the speculation, like the vessel itself, was ready to sail, with its topsails loose, and its blue-peter flying, public opinion, the breeze which was to waft it from our shores, suddenly died away—a dead calm has ensued, and the sails are now flapping. During this momentary and unexpected pause, we * have resolved, before it is

* The affectation of writing in the first person plural, and the general tone of this pamphlet, need some explanation: the best which the writer can offer—is the truth. He had wished to have offered his arguments anonymously, and he

too late, to attempt a short solution of the important problem which, we may truly say, should now occupy the attention of the civilised world : for however hastily theory may have settled the subject of emigration, practice as yet has been silent on the subject ; and we have still to learn what is to be the consequence of the evil that we fear—what is to be the effect of the remedy we propose.

The question, when reduced to its simplest form, is, What is to become of our future population ? And at once it is evident, that to give a decided answer to this question is not within the power of man : for the future is the ' undiscovered country' which is beyond his reach ; but as by twilight we see our path, although the sun is actually below the horizon, so towards futurity may we sometimes grope our way, by the light which is borrowed, or reflected upon it, from the present and the past.

To be enabled, therefore, to judge, or rather to guess at what is to become of our future population, it is necessary that we should first con-

accordingly wrote them as an Article for a Review ; but the impossibility of preserving his incognito, and other reasons, have suddenly induced him to avow a publication, the general style of which it is now too late to correct.

sider what the effect of its increase hitherto has been, and this can only be done by shortly recalling to our minds the history of man (as far as regards the increase of his race) in the different ages of his civilization ; but it has justly been observed, that the early history of every country is involved in obscurity and fable, and we should therefore wilfully run into error if we were to trust to the guidance of old histories and traditions, on which there is so little reliance : however, this is fortunately unnecessary ; for in many parts of the New World man is still to be seen in his earliest state, a living evidence or example of the truths we require.

That this short sketch, with which it is proposed to commence the inquiry, must be trite and uninteresting, is too evident ; yet it is only by an extended view of the question that we can hope to discover its general principles, or to rise above the narrow interests and local prejudices which have hitherto obscured it. Having traced the effects of a gradual increase of population, from the rudest state of society, to our present point of civilization, we will then endeavour to consider, To what extent population is likely to increase : what is eventually to check it ; and whether emigration will or will not relieve it.

Perhaps the most simple, careless state in which man is to be found, is among the Llaneros of Columbia, or the Indians of the Pampas.

In either of these countries he is still to be seen naked and on horseback. The house in which he dwells is the region over which he gallops—the pillow on which he sleeps is the dust from which he sprung, and to which he is doomed to return—the lantern which guides his path is the greater light which rules the day, or the lesser light which rules the night—food is the sport rather than the toil of his life, and although his manhood neither knows the civilised blessings of intellectual society, nor his old age the comfort and consolation of religion, yet, blessed with health, and with little thought or reflection, he lives in a sort of perpetual infancy, careless of the morrow as the wild animals which roam about him.

In this state of society the wear and tear of life is very great. An unrestrained intercourse calls many into the world, but passions equally ungoverned drive many out of it. However, food is in abundance, and neither house nor raiment is required. What the balance of this account may be, or in what proportion, under such circumstances, population may increase or diminish, it

is not the present object to inquire ; all that it is necessary to remark is, that in such a life man does not know want, and that the intercourse between the sexes is unrestrained.

The next step in society may be exemplified by the life of the Spanish South American, or Gaucho, who, as the moon shines upon him through the holes in his hut, talks of the blessings of civilization, and, seated on a bullock's skull, while he prepares for his feet the skin of a horse's hind-leg, describes with contempt the savage state of " los Barbaros" (the Indians), who " eat horses, and have neither clothes nor house." Surrounded by wild cattle and horses, he maintains, in the middle of his hut, an hereditary black pot, into which his family are eternally either putting beef in, or taking it out, and concerning which the only rule seems to be, that the pot should be always so full, that the traveller, without payment or apology, may pay his respects to it with no more scruple than he would, in his own country, to the handle of a pump. Blessed with what he conceives to be such luxury and abundance, and " monarch of all he surveys," the Gaucho passes his days in occupations which it is not the present object to describe : in the mean while the education of the women, as may