From the Author

SUBSTANCE

OF

A SPEECH

BY

W. W. WHITMORE, ESQ., M.P.

ON THE

SUBJECT OF THE TRADE

WITH

The East Indies and China.

MAY 14, 1829.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

1829.

CHARLES WOOD AND SON, PRINTERS,
Poppin's Court, Fleet Street.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The object of this publication being to add to the stock of information and promote discussion on this most important subject, additional illustrations to the arguments used have in some instances been introduced.

SUBSTANCE OF A SPEECH

ON THE

EAST INDIA TRADE.

THE time has at length arrived when I can bring under the consideration of the House the motion of which I gave notice at the early part of the present session. That motion has reference to a subject of vast importance. Indeed I believe there is no question that can now come under the consideration of the legislature of this country, involving greater consequences than the one I am about to submit to the House. Of such vast importance is it, so manifold and weighty are the interests implicated in it, that I own I feel almost appalled at the magnitude of the task I have taken upon myself. But, Sir, when I reflect upon the case I have to submit to your consideration, I feel persuaded its bare statement must make a deep impression, as well on the minds of the

members of this House as on the Country at large. The facts of it are so startling, the inference from those facts so obvious, and the natural result of such brilliant promise, that it cannot fail of exciting attention. I feel reassured too from the consideration, that I may now hope to receive the assistance of others far better able to place this great question in its true light than myself. However defective my statement may be therefore, that defect will be amply compensated by the discussion the question will undergo.

I will now proceed without further preface to enter upon this great subject; and in order to do so with as much clearness as possible, I will divide the observations I have to make under the three several heads which appeared in the notice on the order book. That notice was for an inquiry into the trade between Great Britain, the East Indies, and China. I will first apply myself to Great Britain. I think it clear, that whoever considers the situation of this country, not alone at the present moment but during the last eight or ten years, must be convinced that it is one of difficulty; that it requires an investigation into the causes of the perpetually recurring distress to which all interests have been at times exposed; that means should be taken of giving a fuller development to the national resources, and

thereby diminishing, if it be not possible entirely to remove, the causes from whence such distress has arisen. My conviction is, that if the subject I am about to introduce is fairly investigated, it will be found to contain more than any other the means of effecting this most desirable object. I do not, Sir, feel that I should be justified on the present occasion in entering minutely into these causes of distress; but I conceive it must be obvious to even a casual observer, that there is at present a large amount of capital in this country seeking investment in every possible direction, reducing by competition profits to the lowest ebb; and that with it is combined a power of production on the most gigantic scale the world ever saw. This may in part account for our distress; but if it does tend to produce it, it also affords the means by which we may greatly extend our national resources, and restore that proportion between production and consumption so essential to a healthy condition of all interests in the country. A larger field for the employment of capital, a greater vent for our manufactures, a wider range for our shipping, are the objects we should aim at; and I greatly err if the extensive countries embraced by my motion do not offer all these advantages in the most ample manner. When I contemplate the condition of Ireland, I feel that

here too the benefits of an extension of trade with the East will be largely extended. Sir, by one of the most beneficial alterations ever made in the law of this country, you have in the present session of parliament removed the disabilities under which the great majority of the people of that part of our empire laboured; you have removed the great barrier which hitherto cramped the energies of Ireland; you have opened the door by which prosperity may at length flow into that country; but still something more is wanting. Capacity for employment you have given; but employment itself is still wanted: manufactures wherewith to employ its surplus hands must be established; and what more likely to effect this desirable object than opening so wide a field as the East presents to us? The wants in this case are reciprocal. Ireland wants the teas, the sugars, the cottons of the tropical regions: India requires the cheap manufactures which Ireland aided by English capital may so easily produce. The condition of both parts of our extensive empire would thus be improved, and immense benefit would redound to the whole. Another consideration presses upon our notice, I mean our commercial relations with foreign countries. In several instances these are not on the satisfactory footing we could wish: restric-

tions have been imposed on our intercourse with them, alike injurious to both the parties concerned. In no case has this more clearly appeared than in our relations with the United States of America. By a recent act, as all know, a new tariff has there been established, placing all the foreign trade of that country in a state of considerable hazard and jeopardy. The object of the legislature there seems indeed to be to destroy it altogether; and although they may not effect this object entirely, it cannot I think be doubtful but that they have placed it in circumstances of difficulty, the exact nature and issue of which, it is not easy to foresee. Precarious at all events the intercourse between this country and the United States must continue, so long as they persevere in this anti-commercial, restrictive system. Now, Sir, this consideration becomes of more pressing necessity when we reflect that we draw upwards of three-fourths of the raw cotton we consume from that country. Our consumption is estimated at 197,000,000 lbs., and that the United States furnish us with 151,000,900 lbs. It is, Sir, dangerous to depend to such an extent on the supply of an article of paramount necessity in our manufactures, upon a country whose policy exhibits enmity to the true and now generally recognized principles of international intercourse. I do not

say we should enter upon any recriminatory system; but I do say sound policy dictates that we should if possible guard against the contingencies to which such erroneous views on the part of the United States may expose us. If, as I shall be able to show, cotton to any extent and of the best quality may, under the influence of British capital and skill, be produced in our own dominions in the East Indies, I think it will be obvious that sound policy would dictate our removing whatever impediments may be found to its cultivation.

Having stated generally the grounds on which I think an extension of the trade with the East would be beneficial to this country, I will proceed to consider what that trade actually is, what it has been, and what under different circumstances it may be expected to be. Sir, it is no longer necessary I should enter into any argument to show that the Indian trade is one of great value: the history of the last ten or twelve years abundantly testifies to that fact. It is however curious and instructive to look back upon the predictions so confidently uttered by the advocates of the Company at the renewal of the last charter upon this trade, and to trace, not their fulfilment, but their entire and most triumphant refutation. At that time gentlemen of distinguished talent, of great expe-

rience, and of the highest character, gave the most unpromising evidence upon this subject. In their apprehension it was a gross delusion, a sanguine theory, a wild speculation, to look for any extension of trade with the East Indies. One gentleman thought it possible a few glass bottles might be sent; another asked how it could be conceived, that in a country where the wages of labour did not generally exceed three pence per day, the costly manufactures of this country could find a vent? These gentlemen however knew trade only when cramped by monopoly fetters, not when expanding with the buoyancy of freedom. They judged correctly according to *their* experience. The East India trade in *their* hands had not indeed increased, it had been attended with no profit, it held out no prospect of future improvement. It appears, that between 1793 and 1813 the Company had sustained a loss of 4,000,000*l.* in their trade; and this they boasted of as a signal instance of patriotism and self-devotion to the interests of the country. Judging from this, and from the constant declension of the trade in their hands, it is not to be wondered at they should view as sanguine theory any contemplated increase of the trade with the East. From a parliamentary document, the Indian trade, estimated in official

value, exhibits the following results. From 1790 to 1813, there was a gradual falling off; and from 1814 to the period in which I speak, there has not been a gradual, but a most rapid increase. An annual average, taken in periods of five years, will show this clearly.

	£.
From 1790 to 1795 it was	2,520,821
1796 to 1801	2,342,427
1802 to 1807	2,153,283
1808 to 1812	1,748,340

This was the period of monopoly: let us now contrast it with that of free trade.

	£.
From 1814 to 1819	2,118,446
1820 to 1825	4,028,516
1826	4,877,133
1827	5,891,102

The increase thus shown is perhaps greater than was ever before experienced in so short a period. Some of the details of this trade are singular. The total amount of manufactured cotton exported in 1814 was 818,203 yards; in 1828 it rose to 43,500,000 yards. The value in 1814 was 90,000*l.*; in 1828, notwithstanding a great fall in the price of all manufactured commodities, it amounted to 1,900,000*l.* The white cottons exported to the East Indies in 1814 were 213,208 yards; in 1828, 23,349,000 yards. The

printed cottons in 1814 were 604,800 yards; in 1828, 12,372,379 yards. In the article of cotton twist, a trade which has lately grown up, the increase is equally striking. In 1814 the quantity exported to the East Indies amounted only to 8 lbs.; in the present year it has increased to 4,497,015 lbs.

Having stated these facts, I think I have sufficiently proved that our commerce with the East Indies has greatly increased since the commencement of the free trade, and that strong grounds exist for an inquiry whether it may not be further extended. My own conviction is, that immensely as this trade has increased, we as yet know nothing of the extent to which under a less restrictive system it may still be carried. It is the opinion of every intelligent individual who has had means of information, that there is no assignable limit to our trade with the East, provided a profitable investment for a return cargo could be procured in India. There is no prejudice or unwillingness on the part of the natives to consume our manufactures: the extent of the demand is only limited by the power of payment. This brings me to the imports from India, which in official value were as follows:—

	£.
From 1790 to 1795	3,873,053
1796 to 1801	4,932,254
1802 to 1807	5,098,074
1808 to 1812	4,727,665
1814 to 1819	7,538,928
1820 to 1825	6,635,201
1827	8,343,264

The disproportion in the increase of the export trade as compared with the import is remarkable: in the former there appears an increase in the year 1827 over that of 1814 of nearly fourfold, while the imports of 1827 only exceed those of 1814 by about 25 per cent. This is partly to be accounted for by the stationary nature of our trade with China, from whence so large a portion of these imports is drawn in the shape of tea: but it is also to be accounted for by the circumstance of the productions of India being at present of a very inferior description to similar products imported from other countries, where more capital and skill are employed in their cultivation.

This rule holds good in every instance of the productions of the soil of India, with the exception of indigo; and the exception in this, as in so many other cases, proves the rule. Indigo is an exception solely because British skill and capital are employed in its cultivation and prepa-

ration for the market. About forty-six years ago the experiment was tried of placing it in the hands of Europeans, and the result has been most satisfactory. East India indigo, previously a very inferior product, hardly saleable in Europe, is now become superior to that produced in any other part of the world. It is more valuable than the indigo of South America by 12½ per cent.; and not only this country but all Europe is now chiefly supplied with this important drug from the East Indies. The quantity of indigo imported into Great Britain in 1800 was 3,750,734 lbs.; in 1827 it was 9,683,626 lbs. There can be little doubt that were British subjects permitted to hold lands in India, and their property rendered secure, the same effect would be produced in all other articles of tropical production that has manifested itself in the one above alluded to. The soil and climate of India are eminently favourable to their growth, and nothing is wanted but the capital and skill which this country can supply. The wages of labour too are very low. From all this it is probable, that not only would the quantity of these products be large and of good quality, but that they would be produced at a very cheap rate. In the article of cotton this would equally be shown as in others. The cotton now brought from India is of

an inferior description; no attention is paid to its cultivation, no care shown in selecting and changing the seed, and in introducing the best varieties of this useful plant: its growth is therefore neglected, and its preparation for the market is conducted after a rude and unskilful process: still the quantity imported has considerably increased. In 1814 the quantity imported was 3,750,734 lbs.; in 1827, 32,339,282 lbs. The value of this cotton is considerably less than that from the United States and other parts of the world; in some cases it is inferior by 100 per cent.

The next point to which I will refer is sugar. The sugar cane is grown in all parts of India, and a large quantity might be drawn from thence, provided its manufacture were improved. The quantity imported in 1814 was 49,849 cwt.; in 1828, 516,831 cwt. But of this quantity there was imported from the Mauritius no less than 360,570 cwt. Thus a small island, with a soil not remarkable for fertility, exported far more of this commodity than the whole continent of India. The reason is clear: the sugar cultivation of the Mauritius is under the management of Europeans, while that of India is left to the rude culture and unskilful preparation for the market common to all articles left in the hands of the but half-civilized natives. Nothing can be more

rude than an Indian sugar mill; while to the Mauritius there have been sent from this country during the last few years no less than two hundred sugar mills, with steam engines for the greater number.

Another important product of India is raw silk. India is the native country of the insect from whence this valuable commodity is drawn: but it is in a comparatively rude state, and very inferior to that produced in Italy. The price of Indian silk is 18*s.* per lb., while Italian sells for 28*s.* per lb. The Indian silk cannot be employed in the finer description of goods, but is largely used in the manufacture of the coarser sorts, where from our possession of the raw material we enjoy a superiority over our competitors on the European continent. There is no reason to doubt, that all that is wanted to make silk a staple manufacture in this country, is to allow the raw material to be improved as it might be in India: it would then equal if it did not surpass the European commodity, and afford ample employment to the throwster as well as the silk manufacturer of this country, now unfortunately suffering so much depression. It is highly probable too that India and China would afford an ample market for the sale of the silk manufactured in Great Britain, the raw material of which it had before

supplied. The quantity of raw silk imported from the East Indies and China in 1814 was 1,116,113 lbs.; in 1828, 1,447,549 lbs.

I now approach another and most essential part of my subject, I mean the permission to British subjects to settle in India. The House is aware that at present a great jealousy exists upon this point. No person is allowed to proceed to India without a licence; and an European is liable at any moment to be deported thence at the arbitrary will of the rulers of that country, without trial, without reason assigned for such a harsh proceeding. Neither can an Englishman possess or occupy lands, except within the boundaries of the three presidencies, without permission of the ruling powers, a permission rarely obtained, and, subjected as it is to such restrictions, not very frequently solicited. If we were to adopt the more generous and wiser policy of allowing Europeans to settle in the country, to possess and occupy lands, and to enjoy security for their property, there can be no question that we should confer greater real benefits on the people of that country than by any other system of policy we could adopt. India, I repeat, is highly gifted by nature in soil, in climate, and in situation: it is extensively peopled; but it is a poor country from wanting capital, skill, and in-

centives to industry: these would be furnished, and they can only be furnished by allowing the knowledge, the civilization, and the improvements in the arts, now so largely enjoyed by Europeans, to be introduced and domiciliated amongst them. Had the capital sent out some few years ago to South America, the issue of which has been so disastrous to the individuals who possessed it, been sent to India, as without these absurd and mischievous regulations it probably would have been, and had the English government in India but permitted the same superintendence to be exercised in its expenditure, which the South American Governments not only tolerated but encouraged, there is reason to believe more would by that single act have been done to improve India than by all the acts of the Company's government from the earliest period of their rule to the present moment. Then shall we only really know the benefits of India and the extent to which our commerce with that country can be extended, when we have altered this most vicious and ludicrous policy, if policy that can be called which proposes to itself, not to introduce knowledge, but to perpetuate ignorance; not to fertilize the soil, but to curse it with perpetual sterility; not to stimulate exertion and sharpen ingenuity, but to paralize the arm and

brutalize the mind; not to enrich but to impoverish; not to render your government popular by the benefits you confer, but odious by the exactions you impose upon the people. And for what is it you adopt this system; to protect the people? No, but to preserve monopoly: the origin, the sum and substance of the whole scheme is this. Nothing in nature is so abhorent to a monopolist as a competitor not shackled by the fetters he has imposed on himself: it is not only that he loses by the competition in a pecuniary sense, but the pride, the importance, the self-conceit, inseparable from extensive monopolies, are all wounded in the conflict; the pretence of national benefit arising from the monopoly (a plea never wanting) is completely destroyed. The monopolist, stripped of all his gorgeous but borrowed plumes, stands forth in his true character, an enemy to justice, a spoiler of other men's wealth, a destroyer of national resources, a contemner of the rights and liberties of the people. A slight inquiry into the history of British India will at once convince us that the system I am now discussing arose entirely from the anxiety on the part of the East India Company to protect their monopoly. The very name by which they designated all Europeans not in their service is at once a satisfactory proof—they called them

Interlopers. I am not prepared to contend that the policy was either unwise or inconsistent, so long as monopoly really did continue the principle upon which the government of India was conducted. I believe that some such power was necessary to secure the monopoly system; but it is not now a question whether that principle should be persevered in: it was abandoned in 1813, when the present charter was granted, and it would be as absurd and inconsistent to continue a system, calculated only for the monopoly principle, when you had determined on substituting freedom of trade in its room, as it would have been unwise to have admitted freedom of resort to India when monopoly was your rule and principle of government, and when exclusion was essential to its maintenance. If I were a friend to monopoly instead of being its most inveterate opponent, I should say, banish every free trader from the limits of your charter, burn his ships, rifle his property, ruin his family; you would thus only follow out your own principle, and act consistently at least if not justly; but now that you admit freedom of trade, to continue this system of exclusion is utterly at variance with the principle of your government: it is one of those half measures which are ever as injurious in commerce as in politics; it is keeping the word of promise to the ear and

breaking it to the sense; it is holding out to India as well as to Great Britain the prospect of a golden harvest, but which you take special pains shall not remain till the time of harvest to fill the stores and gladden the heart of the husbandman, whose hopes you have awakened only the more cruelly to disappoint them.

It is alleged this is necessary, as well to preserve your empire in India, as to protect the natives of that country: but how strange and anomalous is such a policy. Where was it ever before adopted? To what other country would you venture to apply it even in argument, except to India? What would any gentleman in this House say to such an argument if applied, for instance, to Ireland? Why I suspect he would turn away with contempt and ridicule from such a reasoner. And how, permit me to ask, can that be true with regard to India which is not only utterly false but contemptibly ridiculous when applied to any other country or people under the sun? Was it by preventing Roman citizens from settling in the distant provinces, and carrying with them their arts, their capital, their skill, their literature, and their energy, that Rome became the mistress of the civilized world, and preserved her dominion so long? No, but by not only permitting but encouraging colonization

throughout the whole range of her empire. Is it by a similar cramped and wretched policy that Russia holds together the greatest empire the world ever witnessed? No, but by pushing forth its colonial outposts, if the expression may be allowed, in all directions, occupying the intermediate ground, raising the natives in the scale of civilization, and imparting to them the whole of the knowledge, the arts and sciences, of which Russia herself is possessed. So far am I from thinking any strength or permanency is afforded to our Indian empire from this policy, that I feel convinced the very reverse is the case. At present we hold India by a single thread: allow settlement by Englishmen in India, you convert the tie from the single thread into a cable composed of millions of those threads. Each may be snapt asunder by the storm; both may, and in all human probability will be in time worn out by friction; but the probable duration of the latter would be increased just in proportion to the accumulation of material and the elements of adhesion you employed in its construction. You now govern India by the sword, and that sword wielded by the natives. Attachment to you as rulers no one pretends to say exists; benefit you have not conferred upon any class; wealth you have not poured into the country, but extracted with all

the force of the fiscal screw from it; and unhappily for India, while you exclude European skill generally from her fields, you introduce it in all its perfection in the construction of that most powerful engine; nay, you avail yourselves of Indian extortion to render still more effectual the deadly skill of the European minister of finance.

Under these circumstances, had you not to deal with a people peculiarly submissive to their rulers, it is probable your empire would not be of any lengthened duration; and it is obviously exposed to contingencies the greater in proportion to the slight hold you have over the country, and the ignorance you are in respecting the habits, feelings, and modes of thinking of the natives. That this is the case we have the direct testimony of one of the ablest among the many able individuals who have afforded their talents to the Company's government — I mean Sir H. Stachey, who thus describes the situation we stand in towards the natives:—

"We cannot study the genius of the people in its own sphere of action. We know little of their domestic life, their knowledge, conversation, amusements, their trades, casts, or any of those national and individual characteristics which are essential to a complete knowledge of them. Every day affords us examples of something new and

surprising; and we have no principle to guide us in the investigation of facts, except an extreme diffidence of our opinion, a consciousness of inability to judge of what is probable or improbable."

Again he says:—

"The evil I complain of is extensive, and I fear irreparable. The difficulty we experience in discerning truth from falsehood among the natives, may be ascribed, I think, chiefly to our want of connection with them, to the peculiarity of their manners and habits, and their excessive ignorance of our character, and our almost equal ignorance of theirs."

The evil thus complained of, and from whence there flows, amongst other injurious consequences, a difficulty amounting in some cases to an impossibility in detecting crime and doing justice between the parties seeking adjustment of their claims in your courts of law, is, as he says, irreparable under the present system, and can only be remedied by such an intimate admixture between the native population and Englishmen as would arise from the permission to settle in the country. A cheaper and more efficient administration of the laws would result from it, mutual interests would beget parity of feeling, and the good to be found in the character of each nation would be

unfolded to the other. In this way only can any permanent hold ever be obtained of the country, or will it be possible to introduce those improvements which a beneficent government would wish to carry into effect, and which are now so much wanted in our Indian empire.

I proceed now to the last point of our discussion—I mean the trade with China. Gentlemen are aware that this is now a strict monopoly in the hands of the East India Company. They have by their charter the exclusive right of trading with that immense empire, containing 150,000,000 of inhabitants, and from whence so important an article of our consumption as tea is exclusively drawn. It is singular, that in the earlier stages of the intercourse of Europeans with that quarter of the globe, none of that extreme jealousy which now marks the conduct of the Chinese and other nations similarly situated appears to have existed. In the seventeenth century there were four ports instead of one open in China for foreigners: the empire of Japan was also open, as well as the Eastern Archipelago, Cochin China, and Siam; and it was not until the different nations of Europe had shut up the trade with these countries in the hands of companies, that the present jealous exclusion was adopted by these Asiatic governments.

The object of monopolists is always if possible to buy under and sell above the market price; and by the power they often possessed of excluding free competition they were able at times to effect this object. They were haughty too and overbearing in their carriage, their ships were armed, their officers in uniform, and demeaning themselves more as naval commanders than as captains of merchantmen. The natives were, and felt themselves to be, inferior in the arts of war, and consequently stood in awe of these formidable traders: add to which, the jealousies and constant conflicts between the rival European companies, entailing injury upon the natives they drew into their quarrels, or cramping their trade by their unjust appropriations of parts of it to themselves, together with perpetual attempts to grasp at territory and to establish their dominion in the country where they had obtained it;—these circumstances sufficiently account for the restrictions imposed by the natives in their intercourse with Europeans. Japan has now for upwards of a century and a half entirely closed its ports, except to the miserable remnant of a Dutch factory, which is still tolerated, more as it would appear to prove how much humility can be extracted from Dutch cupidity than with any view of allowing them to carry on a beneficial trade. From Siam and Cochin China, Europeans are

almost entirely excluded; and with the great empire of China, as is well known, the intercourse is confined to the single port of Canton, and placed under the superintendence of the Hong merchants. This slight sketch, which shows clearly the injury ever inflicted on commerce by monopoly, and the superior benefits of free trade, the valuable work of Mr. Crawfurd on the Eastern Archipelago has enabled me to give; a work alike distinguished for the information it affords, as for the interesting and entertaining nature of its general contents: and here, Sir, having mentioned Mr. Crawfurd, I cannot resist the temptation I feel to express the obligation, not I only, but the country too in my opinion, is under to him for the great light he has thrown by his researches upon the whole of this question.

The China trade then is exclusively in the hands of the East India Company. Let us see whether it is a prosperous one, in so far as the export of British produce is concerned. Has it increased or diminished? Official documents must answer this question.

	£.
From 1801 to 1810 the annual average export to Canton was	1,152,206
1811 to 1822	780,959
1823 to 1827	682,177
In 1827	493,815
In 1828	853,494

The average of the two last years is 678,654*l.*, exhibiting a falling off, as compared with the first period, of somewhere about forty per cent. It is true that this is declared, or real, not official value; and that as manufactured articles have recently fallen in value, owing partly to the fall in the value of the raw material, partly to the improvement in machinery, and partly also to the altered value of our currency, this exhibits a greater falling off than has actually taken place. But after making ample deductions on these heads it will still be found, that in the hands of the East India Company the export of British produce to China has considerably declined within the few last years. I am well aware, that until the expiration of the Charter we cannot, other than by agreement with the East India Company, make any alteration in the mode of conducting this trade; but surely the facts I have stated render an early and most searching inquiry indispensable. When the immense population of this vast empire is considered, when we reflect that it stretches to the fifty-third degree of north latitude; that the Chinese require warm clothing, and have nothing resembling our woollen manufacture; that they are eminently a commercial people, anxious to purchase their commodities in the cheapest market, and possessed of none of the recent improvements by which Europeans have,

by abridging hand labour, so greatly reduced the value of manufactured articles; and when it is further considered, that from that country we are supplied with an article of consumption in general use amongst the whole population of this empire, and that the quantity of tea annually consumed might easily be doubled or trebled provided its price were reduced;—I say when all these things are taken into consideration, it is not extravagant to assume, that an export trade now limited to 6 or 700,000*l.* might be extended to some millions*. I am aware it will be urged, that the Chinese are a jealous people, with whom it is difficult to trade, as is evinced by their confining their foreign trade to one port, and putting it under the superintendence of the Hong merchants; and that the skilful management and great importance of the Company's factory are necessary to preserve it. This I believe to be a great fallacy. Mr. Melburne, in his valuable work on Oriental Commerce, says—"The commerce of Canton, immense as it is, is carried on with astonishing regularity, and in no part of the world is business transacted with so much ease and dispatch."

The Americans find no difficulty in carrying

* Our trade with the United States of America amounts, on an average of five years ending 1826, to 6,467,163*l.*; its population being about 12,000,000.

on their free trade with China, supplying not only the United States but all the world, except Great Britain, with Chinese produce, and importing even British manufactures into Canton. Their trade has speedily grown up to one of great importance. The amount of it, as given in evidence before the Lords' Committee, 1821, is as follows:—

AMERICAN IMPORTS INTO CHINA.

	Dollars.
1804-5	3,555,818
1817-18	6,777,000
1824-5	8,902,045*

The only reason why this trade is not carried much further is, that tea does not in the United States, as here, enter into the daily consumption of the entire population.

The willingness of the Chinese to consume European manufactures is again evidenced by the overland trade the Russians carry on with the north-eastern parts of that empire through the emporium of Krachta. The following extracts from Mr. Tate's evidence given before the Lords' Committee in 1821 are highly important as bearing upon this point.

* The amount of the American trade with China for the year 1824-5 is taken from the accounts of the American Consulate at Canton.

"Articles of British manufacture are suitable for the consumption of the northern provinces of China; and in spite of every obstacle they have found their way to that distant country by an overland journey of upwards of five thousand miles, a part of which is through regions where there are neither roads nor inhabitants." He adds, "coarse woollens worth 4*s.* or 5*s.* per yard, and Manchester velveteens, formed a part of these exports." "Manchester velveteens, sold in London in 1820 at from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 2*d.* per yard, were resold to the Chinese at from 8*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* per yard." "An article costing at Krachta 8*s.* 6*d.* per yard might be delivered by sea in the northern parts of China at 2*s.* 6*d.*" "The total quantity of European manufactures bartered at Krachta in 1820 was in value 1,000,000*l.**"

I conceive therefore that there is every reasonable ground for expecting, that under a system of free trade a very large vent for the manufactures of this country might be found in China, and that the peculiar habits of the Chinese would interpose no effectual bar to this trade. But granting,

* By recent accounts from St. Petersburgh, the consumption of tea in Russia is estimated at 25,200,000 lbs.; so that Russia next to ourselves is the greatest consumer of tea. Besides Krachta, a trade has been recently opened with China at two other posts on the frontier.

for the sake of argument, there was a difficulty in carrying on a trade direct with Canton, I am inclined to believe that it would only throw it into the channel now opened in the Eastern Archipelago by our thriving settlement of Sincapore; and nothing perhaps proves more decidedly the value and extent of the trade in this part of the world than the rapid growth of the emporium I now allude to.

Mr. Crawfurd's account of it is—

"But perhaps the most remarkable example we have of the success of free trade is exhibited in the history of the little settlement of Sincapore, a barren islet, and having only the advantage of a convenient locality. In the commencement of the year 1819, not ten acres of the primeval forest which covered it was cleared, and its whole inhabitants consisted of about three hundred beggarly Malays, not only possessing no industrious habits, but notorious and dangerous pirates. We have before us the accounts of its exports and imports for the year ending the 30th of April 1828, and find that their joint amount was 2,875,800*l.*: the exports alone amounted to 1,387,201*l.*; that is to say, they exceeded the declared value of the exports of the East India Company from the whole United Kingdom to all India and China in the corresponding year by

88,608*l.*, giving the Company the advantage of all their civil and military stores, but observing on the other hand, that they did not contribute a shilling towards the amount of the Sincapore exports. Our whole trade to the straits of Malacca in 1814 was short of 1,000,000*l.*; at present it considerably exceeds 4,000,000*l.*"

In addition to this it is to be observed, that amongst the ships touching at Sincapore are Chinese junks: in 1826 they amounted to ten, and a part of their cargo was tea, which they imported in that year to the extent of 323,913 lbs.; thus a direct trade has already commenced between China and Sincapore, and there can be no doubt that it might be increased to any extent which our trade with China might require.

It is to be remarked, that tea is not the produce of the province where Canton is situated, but of two maritime provinces to the northward of it. The black tea is grown in the province of Fokein, and the green in that of Kiangnan; but a small part is now sent from either province by sea to Canton: the black tea is carried on the back of porters over a chain of mountains surrounding Fokein, and the nearest place of its growth to Canton is upwards of five hundred miles. The green tea district is seven or eight hundred miles distant from it, but there is I be-

lieve inland navigation nearly the whole way; that, however, which is clear is, that the tea might be sent by sea direct from the province where it is grown to Sincapore, and sold at least as ch ap there as it now is at Canton.

There is one other point which I must not omit —it is the price at which the Company sell their tea to the people of this country. Not only are we greatly injured in a commercial sense by their rigid monopoly with China, but we are also taxed to the amount of about 2,000,000*l.* a year in the shape of the extra price they oblige us to pay for the tea we consume. The following is the account of the sale of tea at the India House in 1828.

Tea sold	31,300,000 lbs.
	£.
Sold for (exclusive of duty)	4,254,874
Price if sold at Hamburgh	1,446,121
Difference	£. 2,808,753

It is however asserted, that the quality of the Company's tea is better than that sold on the Continent. It may be so to a trifling extent, but I believe this is by no means certain; and making every reasonable allowance for the difference of quality, the extra charge on account of the East India Company's monopoly will not much (if it

does at all) fall short of my estimate. Now it is remarkable, that it is only since the passing of the last charter that this power of overcharge has existed—since the 18th George II. Until that period there had always existed a most wholesome provision of law, by which the lords of the treasury were empowered to admit an import of tea from the Continent of Europe, whenever it should appear the price of the Company's tea was higher than that sold in other countries. This law was renewed by several acts, and even so recently as the year 1822; and a legal doubt may still exist whether it was repealed by the charter of 1813. I fear, however, the words of the clause in that charter relating to the trade in tea are too strict to admit of our now acting upon this most wholesome provision of law. However that may be, its principle is too just ever to be lost sight of, and at the earliest possible period the country ought to demand justice upon this head.

I believe I have now gone through the main points of my case. My object has been more to give an outline of it than to weary the House by entering too minutely into detail upon it. It only remains for me to remind the House of the immense opening afforded to our trade by the adoption of the principle of free trade in the extensive

regions to which my motion has reference—regions embracing a population of at least 300,000,000, all anxious to consume our manufactures, provided only we take their products in return: a population placed precisely in a condition, and living in a climate, which would render a trade with them the most natural and the most beneficial to this country. I would too implore the House to reflect, that a duty is imposed upon the legislature of this country to take into its serious consideration the state of its immense empire in the East, to see how best the condition of its subjects can be ameliorated, and in what way we may most easily confer upon them the blessings of English justice and English civilization; in what manner we can the most effectually augment their wealth and extend their commerce. I feel assured that the only practicable mode in which these great objects can be accomplished is by placing our commercial relations with them on a footing of perfect freedom and equality.

THE END.

CHARLES WOOD AND SON, PRINTERS,
Poppin's Court, Fleet Street.