

understand and appreciate their County system, whereas the Provincial organization was too distant, and necessarily too much engrossed with affairs in which this district was uninterested, to please them. There is no use in saying a district could be better governed by system A. if the people are strongly disposed in favour of system B. Granted A.s' greater flexibility, more efficient organization, broader principles, &c., if B. receives the cordial co-operation of the people, it is better for all parties that they should adopt it; and if it should subsequently be made clear to them by example and experience that A. is the better system, it will then be time enough to introduce A., and no risk will have been run of choking those feelings of patriotism and interest in public affairs which are indispensable to good Government in a free country.

To apply this to our mining population, I believe there is nothing which will be more likely to tie the better class of miners to the country than the fact of their feeling that they have a fair share in its government, and that, as far as practicable, they are allowed to manage their own local affairs without interference from any other class or interest. On the other hand, there is nothing so calculated to disgust miners with the Colony as to see that their interests are subordinated to those of the agricultural or other classes; that the gold they obtain, the revenue they bring in, the towns they create, are looked upon and valued solely as they affect those other classes; but that the well-being of the miners themselves, their political rights and organization, are beneath the attention of the Government.

#### PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Having now pointed out what appears to be the proper functions of Government with respect to the development of mining industries, it is needful that I should say a few words on private enterprise. It is, as I have before shown, unwise for a Government to interfere with the development of any one interest when it has a number of others committed to its charge. If, therefore, no local Government exists in the spot where the mining industry is to be thrown open, it will be for private persons to combine and take the matter up, the Government merely furnishing whatever information it can. The means which such an association may adopt will probably be very much the same as would have been taken by a local Government, if such had existed. These have already been spoken of, and there is no occasion to say more with respect to them. As a general rule, it may be said that, whether in mining adventure or any other branch of industry, private combination is a better instrument to work with than any Government organization; what is lost in system and official authority is gained in heartiness and a more direct control over the works. Every Government must have many duties to attend to even where the Government are mainly dependent upon a single branch of industry, and to call upon the Executive to interfere with the industrial occupation of the people is to risk the neglect of some other duty which more properly belongs to the Government.

#### CONCLUSION.

I believe that the whole subject proposed for this Essay has now been sufficiently although briefly discussed. In dealing with it, I have endeavoured to take as comprehensive a view as possible, not confining my remarks to the practical means which might be adopted for developing the mineral wealth of New Zealand, but also taking into consideration the political bearings of the question, and the attitude which should be assumed by the different Governments of the country, in order to give the greatest security and permanence to this and other industries. I will now recapitulate, as shortly as possible, the conclusions at which I have arrived.

It has been found that the great majority of alluvial diggers, partly on account of the migratory habit of life which has become with them a second nature, partly on account of the great hopes of gain which their present employment holds out to them, are not likely to turn their attention to any other industry than that which they are now following. On the other hand, it may be argued with certainty that the alluvial diggings, as distinguished from mines, of New Zealand, have no claim, any more than those of other parts of the world, to be regarded as permanent or likely to last more than a few years. Consequently, we may expect that, simultaneously with the opening of a new field in another part of the world, a large proportion of our digger population will leave us. It appears, however, both from the nature of the case and also from all the information which has as yet been made public, that there is a great probability even on the West Coast, and certainly in Otago, that quartz mining may be followed with advantage. There is also a probability that alluvial mining of the deep placer kind might be developed to a much greater degree than it has hitherto been. In order successfully to develop those mines which have been proved to exist, a more cordial co-operation between labour and capital must be established. This will gradually be brought about by the natural advancement of the Colony. When capitalists and labourers become satisfied that a profitable field is offered to them they will avail themselves of it, although the process may be slow. This brings us to the second part of the subject, viz., the permanent investment of capital. The manner in which this is set forth in the heading of the Essay is fallacious; for although capital may be exported from the mining districts, it is not divided from the general current of trade to and from the Colony. If this is true, it is evident that were it not for the export of gold from the mining districts, our importing power would be seriously affected, and our trade consequently diminished. As to the general question of the permanent settlement of mining districts and the investment of capital therein, the General Government can do but little directly beyond instructing the local Governments, and it is for the local Government to take all direct steps towards the end in view. These may be briefly summarized as follows: Being themselves convinced by practical observation, and by the information received from the Colonial Government, that they possess payable mines, the local Governments should lay that information before capitalists, and offer the most liberal terms possible consistently with their duty towards the whole of the public interests. Indirectly, the Colonial Government may exercise an immense influence, by seeing that equal justice is meted out by the minor Governments to all interests alike; and if this cannot be secured under present forms, by so altering them as to effect it. Unless this can be done, it is best that the promotion of all new industries should be left entirely to private persons.