

become exhausted. All these considerations forced me to the conclusion that it was an act of the supremest folly to drain the colonies of their population for the purpose of doing battle seven thousand miles away in a struggle about the eventual issue of which there could not be the slightest anxiety or doubt.

If it was considered necessary to impress foreign powers with the moral lesson of colonial loyalty and enthusiasm by the dispatch of a first contingent from each, does it not strike one that the good effect of that lesson is likely to be destroyed by the sending of contingent after contingent upon the same unfortunate errand? Will not this apparently unrestricted exodus to South Africa create an impression in unfriendly quarters that England is in extremities, and that her prestige and prowess are in imminent difficulty and peril? I am not so pessimistic as to suppose for one moment that she is, or is at all likely to be, in such straits, or that her foremost prestige amongst the nations of the earth stands the slightest danger of not being maintained in this war with the Boers; but, as an Australasian, I protest against this serious diminution of our population, against this maddened rush from our shores when, if we look to our own requirements, we want to keep every man of them here. What is the state of the defences in any one of the Australasian colonies? Will any one say for one moment—or, if he says it, does he really believe it—that our defences are in an effective condition? Is there any difficulty in realising the awkward position these colonies might be placed in at any moment in the event of any European complications that might arise? In this position of affairs, why send the best physical types of our young men, the very flower of our population, out of the country, when it is population, and population of that stamp, we stand most in need of? Why contribute funds to the wealthiest nation on earth when the money could be more easily and legitimately expended in placing ourselves in a position to repel an enemy?

In the pursuit of my journalistic profession I have given expression to these views. That they are not popular with the present unthinking and uninformed multitude I doubt not, but they are my deep-rooted and conscientious convictions nevertheless, and if I am to suffer for the candid and fearless exposition of them, I find solace in the belief that they will be acquiesced in eventually, when the feverish pulse of the majority gets restored to its normal condition, and calmness supplants the existing excitement. It is all very well for people just now to shout themselves hoarse, to be carried away by waving banners and by the intoxicating influences of martial airs; only wait until the score comes to be reckoned up, until the piper has to be paid, and depend upon it they will dance to a less agreeable tune. At the same time, I feel convinced that even in this small community there are hundreds, nay thousands, of people who think exactly as I do on the subject, and only refrain from giving vent to their feelings in order to escape insult and abuse from persons who have allowed this demon of jingoism to make captive of their reason, and to warp their better and calmer judgment.

It is one of the highest functions of every honest, well-meaning, and straightforward journalist to do all he can on occasions such as this to stem the current of popular frenzy, to inculcate the salutary ideas of moderation, and to strive all he knows to direct public opinion into the best and safest channels. In my humble capacity, this is precisely what I have endeavoured to do, profoundly and conscientiously believing that I was doing right, and believing also that I was living in a free and enlightened country. Is it possible that I have been under a delusion all the best years of my life, and that I am now to realise that freedom of thought and speech in New Zealand—that boasted palladium of individual and collective liberty—is nothing but a myth after all?

I remain, &c.,

The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, Premier.

J. GRATTAN GREY.

EXTRACT FROM APPENDICES TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, dated 14th September, 1899.

*Reporting Debates and Printing Committee.*

The Hon. Major Steward, from the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee, brought up a report relative to *Hansard* reporters doing outside political work, together with minutes of proceedings and exhibits; and the report was read as follows:—

“The Reporting Debates and Printing Committee has the honour to report, in connection with the statements made by Mr. Morrison, M.H.R., in Committee of Supply, relative to Mr. J. Grattan Grey, chief of the *Hansard* staff, and also in connection with the question of *Hansard* reporters doing outside political work, that it has come to the following resolutions:—

“That the Committee has been unable to obtain a copy of the article contributed to the *New York Times*, and extracts from which were quoted in a speech in the House by Mr. Morrison, member for Caversham.

“That Mr. J. Grattan Grey admits that the article referred to was published in that journal over his name, but states that his official designation was not appended or attached thereto.

“That the terms of Mr. Grey's appointment expressly accord him ‘liberty, after completion of *Hansard* each session, to take outside work.’

“That this Committee recommends that, in future, members of the *Hansard* staff should not actively participate in New Zealand politics, by writing articles for publication or otherwise; although it sees no objection to members of the staff being employed in reporting or literary work when not required to attend to their parliamentary duties.”

A copy of the minutes of the proceedings is attached, together with exhibits.

Ordered to lie on the table.