

States now, and those that went first ... are sending for all their relations and friends". A witness from Headcorn in Kent, who may or may not be the gentleman referred to, testified that his parish had raised £2,308 in 1823, £2,025 in 1824, £1,925 in 1825 and £1,919 in 1826 to convey 80 paupers to Canada and the United States, all agricultural labourers and their families.³

The Third Report from the same Select Committee in 1827 went on to recommend a system of assisted emigration, provided that parishes should contribute to the cost only if their general and pecuniary interests could be demonstrably benefited, and provided that the emigrants were paupers who went voluntarily. All witnesses agreed that poor relief for the able-bodied poor should be discontinued and the emigration policy would help achieve this. The Committee also recommended loans to facilitate emigration, repayable by the emigrants in due course, perhaps seven years later. The cost of locating a family of five in the colonies was put at £60. A Board of Emigration in London was recommended and "no person above the age of 50 years would be accepted as a Government emigrant, except under very special circumstances. Each head of a family should be in a sound state of health, of good character, desirous of emigrating, and in want of that effective demand for his labour by which he can obtain the means of independent subsistence." Rather optimistically, the Committee also recommended that the scheme should be on the basis of families of five, and "the proportion of a man, woman and three children must be maintained."

A system not unlike that which was recommended was indeed set up and by 1832 the Commissioners of Emigration reported to Parliament⁴ that emigrant numbers had tripled in five years to over 50,000 in 1831. The emigrants were a mix of the rich and poor, the former funding themselves. "Among the emigrants from England a very large portion were possessed of considerable property, particularly those from Yorkshire and Cumberland; and from some of the midland and western counties many respectable emigrants came out. The number of persons sent out or aided by the parishes or landlords from the United Kingdom were not so great as is generally supposed, amounting to 4,931 persons [compared with 45,323 who "came on their own resources"]... The most helpless and poorest emigrants who arrived this year [in Quebec] from

³ James Homeward, QQ 1653-96.

⁴ Report of the Commissioners of Emigration 15 March 1832 (Parliamentary Papers XXXIII, 1831-2), pp 6, 20.