

the industry in question ; but unless this is the case, it will show far more wisdom on the part of those in power to leave the matter to private enterprise.

As to the practical means of developing mining industries which may be adopted by a local Government which really represents the people, I will assume, for the purpose of argument, that sufficient data have been furnished by the central Government (whether Provincial or Colonial) to establish the certainty, or at all events the extreme probability, that the locality in question contains mines of a payable nature, and that those to whom it would be of the greatest immediate benefit are willing to risk something in opening up these mines. First of all, I do not suppose that any one will maintain that it would be wise of a Government to engage itself directly in the work ; to stimulate private enterprise—either local or foreign—by the liberality of the terms which it offers, is all that it would be judicious to attempt. These terms may be the promise of a direct money reward, a guarantee of interest on outlay for a given term, an undertaking to expend a certain amount in the formation of a road to the mine, or any similar incitement.

It is, as has been said, for the central Government to instruct the local ; but it is for the latter to utilize, and follow out into detail, whatever information it may receive. In most instances it will be advisable to have the ground surveyed, and to obtain a report from a competent mining engineer. Estimates of expense of working, probable outlay before a return can be expected, and of profits, should be made where possible, and a statement of the terms offered to investors should be published. The whole matter should be kept in constant agitation, by laying whatever data are from time to time obtained, together with the terms offered, before those who are likely to embark in the enterprise. For this purpose agents should be appointed in different parts of the world, who will be required to use every effort in their power for advancing the development of the mines. The Government should carefully guard against a failure through the adventure being undertaken by incompetent persons. As far as the opening of the mine involves any expenditure of public funds, or the pledging in any way of the public credit, the Government is bound to satisfy itself that it receives a fair *quid pro quo*. Having once succeeded in establishing the nucleus, it will be for the Executive to open up roads over the district ; this, I understand, has been done in Otago to a considerable extent, and the same course is now being followed on the West Coast.

If it is found that the mines cannot be developed by the means indicated, it must be attributed to one of two causes,—either the information furnished is too scant, or the undertaking is of too speculative a nature. The former difficulty may be remedied by further investigation, but for the latter there is no remedy ; and a Government will not be justified, when they find that no private party will undertake the task, in risking the public funds on so very questionable an enterprise. With the advancement of the Colony the enterprising spirit will materially grow ; and if the Government in question remains satisfied that payable mines exist, they may with propriety renew their offer from time to time, and there can be no doubt that eventually it will be taken up. But to force the matter on prematurely by extravagant offers, or by the slightest over-colouring in any information which may be furnished, is to risk, not merely the public money, but the public credit. There is a happy medium between inactivity and *puffery*, which it is necessary that the Government should strictly adhere to ; and to my mind a slight leaning towards the former betokens a far safer condition, and a better ultimate prospect, than the utmost energy combined with a tendency to exaggeration, however small.

Having now discussed, as far as is necessary for the present object, the position which the local Governments of New Zealand should hold, as compared with that which they actually do hold, towards the development of mining industries, I return to the point alluded to in an earlier page—namely, the indirect influence which the Colonial Government may exercise towards the same end.

INDIRECT INFLUENCE OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT.

If the statement that the people of New Zealand do not cordially support their present local Governments is in accordance with the facts of the case, it becomes at once evident that the form of those Governments is unsuitable. These forms may be too advanced for the present stage of popular political education in New Zealand ; or they may be too rigid in their nature to adapt themselves to new conditions, and to take account of the constant subdivisions of interests which must occur in a country which is being rapidly peopled, and in which industries of the most diverse nature are being developed ; or lastly, paradoxical as it may appear, these local institutions may partake of both these evils—as political organizations they may be too good, and yet, as machines for promoting industry and district colonization, they may be totally inadequate. On this subject I think sufficient has already been said to show that it is from the combination of the two causes named, that political impassivity is making such rapid progress in New Zealand. The electors are disgusted with Provincial Governments because they are unsuited to fulfil the functions of District Governments ; and the Provincial Governments, struggling to undertake a task which is beyond their rightful functions, are compelled to favour the predominating interest—that is, the towns.

Now it appears to me that if there is one task more than another which it is the duty of the Supreme State Government to undertake, it is that of watching over the development of public spirit in the Colony, or in other words, of superintending the political education of the people. It is quite clear, moreover, that oppression is not the best instrument of education which could be devised. If, therefore, it is seen that one part of the people or one interest is neglected, or the revenue raised from it spent on another interest, it appears to be the manifest duty of the Colony to interfere, provided that its interference be in accordance with a system, and not by mere caprice.

But apart from the question of oppression, it seems to me that if the feeling of discontent with the Provincial Government has gathered such strength in any district that whatever course the Provinces may pursue will be received with dissatisfaction, the cause of peace and order requires that that district shall be allowed to manage its own affairs. I do not think that any Government could have been more desirous to do justice than that of Canterbury to Westland in 1866-67, yet the result was such universal dissatisfaction, that the General Assembly had to step in and provide an organization more suited to the requirements, because to the desires, of the people. The inhabitants of Westland can