

fog? Is the mental condition of the place good? Is it free of discontent, irritation, or excitement? Is the death-rate that of a healthy community, and is the hereditary history of the town of such a character as to be creditable to its constitutional qualities? In a word, is it a town that an insurance company could insure wholesale without weighting it with any excess on the normal premium?

If the answer to all these questions be in the affirmative, then the town may be pronounced healthy. If it fail to give so clean a record, then the sanitary doctor is to prescribe for it sanitarily, as the curative doctor, might in his way, prescribe for a sick man; and, sadly to the injury of the last-named gentleman, is expected to perform the ruinous act of destroying the curative business altogether.

VOLUME II.

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PART II.

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*PREVENTION OF PAUPERISM AND POVERTY.*

## CHAPTER I.

### FIRST WORKS ON POOR LAW REFORM.



APPROACH now those particular parts of Mr. Chadwick's labours which have reference to the Poor Law and the prevention of poverty. Regarding these labours, public opinion has all through been deeply interested and somewhat divided.

To some thinkers these are the most important labours of our author, as well as the most useful. To other thinkers they are considered minor in comparison with what he has effected in educational and sanitary advancement. To a third, and small class, they have always been, and still are, open to criticism and objection.

There is something offering in itself distinctive proof of great administrative ability in works which have excited so much wide and diverse opinion and sentiment, and I have material before me,—historical, controversial, and personal,—sufficient to fill several volumes on these works alone. Thirty years ago I might have produced from them such volumes, but, alas! the generation that would have been interested in them has largely passed away, and so, I believe, I shall contribute to the general taste most successfully by condensing into some sixty or

seventy pages the salient points, historical and personal, of the subjects in hand.

In 1829, Mr. Chadwick, then looking forward toward a professional career as a barrister, contributed to the *London Review* two papers, one on the Public Charities in France, the other on Preventive Police. Both essays attracted considerable attention, and may be said to have brought their author immediately into public notice. The essay on Preventive Police will be noticed further on; the essay on Public Charities in France requires this notice now, because it stimulated inquiry into the state of poverty in England. At the same time it brought its author forward as one who would prove a good practical inquirer and administrator on the then vexed question of the English poor, and the mode of legislating for them in the most advantageous manner for the nation

Twelve years before this time a Committee of the House of Commons had stated their opinion that, "unless some efficacious check were interposed, there was then every reason to think that the amount of the assessment would continue to increase until at a period, more or less remote, according to the progress the evil had already made in different places, it should have absorbed the profits of the property on which the rate might have been assessed, producing thereby the neglect and ruin of the land and the waste or removal of other property, to the utter subversion of the happy order of society, so long upheld in these kingdoms."

In consequence of the recommendations of that Committee, the power of ordering relief through the magistrates was restricted, and some other changes

were introduced; but matters remained in an unsettled state until 1832—the year of the passage of the Reform Bill,—when Lord Grey's government established a Commission of Inquiry into the operation of the existing Poor Laws in England and Wales,—laws which had been enforced from the time of Elizabeth.

The body of Commissioners thus appointed consisted of the Bishop of London (Dr. Blomfield), the Bishop of Chester (Dr. Longley, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), W. Sturges Bourne, Nassau W. Senior, Henry Bishop, Henry Gawler, and Walter Coulson, under whom eighteen Assistant Commissioners were appointed, who in the performance of their duties travelled through different parts of England, and collected inquiries of the most systematic kind in the districts allotted to them.

At the instance of Mr. Nassau Senior, Mr. Chadwick was appointed as one of the Assistant Commissioners, and the districts of London and Berkshire were assigned to Mr. Chadwick, whose name finally appeared, with that of Mr. James Traill, in the Complete Report of the Commission, published from Whitehall Yard on the 20th of February, 1834.

The instructions given by the Commissioners to their Assistant Commissioners suggested inquiry under four heads:—

- I. The form in which parochial relief is given.
- II. The persons to whom it is given.
- III. The persons by whom it is awarded.
- IV. The persons at whose expense it is given.

These were the first four grand divisions; but it was intimated that the inquiry would suggest con-

siderable alterations in the existing law. It was also suggested that those alterations might be facilitated by some further measures, such as :—

V. Affording facilities for emigration.

VI. Facilitating the occupation and even the acquisition of land by labourers.

VII. Removing the tax on servants so far as it is found to interfere with their residence under their employers' roof.

VIII. Improving the rural police.

## CHAPTER II.

### PLAN OF INQUIRY INTO THE STATE OF THE POOR.

**T**HE series of reports on the state of the poor in England, which emanated from the Assistant Commissioners in 1832-3, and which led to the Report of 1834, is one of the most important documents in the history of the century. It depicts with photographic accuracy the England of that day as it appeared to the eyes of a body of men as competent as any it was possible to find for the purpose of the investigation. I commend this report to every historian, as I have ventured to commend the report on the sanitary condition of the labouring classes; but I can only deal with it here in so far as it relates to Mr. Chadwick's labours.

Mr. Chadwick's report sets forth at its opening that, in the course of his inquiries into the practical operation of the Poor Laws in the Metropolis, some points occurred to him which induced him to avail himself of the opportunity of visiting one of the agricultural counties for the purpose of investigating different modes of administration and their effects in the agricultural parishes, and of comparing them with similar operations in some of the larger parishes of London.

This, at the outset, was the intention. But the report is memorable in consequence of the results which spring from it. It may be stated without risk of exaggeration that, whether for good or for evil, the summary of this report included the great change which took place afterwards in Poor Law administration, and was practically the basis of the modern English Poor Law as distinct from the administration which had dated from the days of Elizabeth.

I shall quote at length this important summary in the next chapter; but I think it necessary, at this point, to fix the attention of the reader by one or two examples on the plan of the inquiry. He will in this way see the more readily how the conclusions submitted were derived.

#### INQUIRY AT WINDSOR.

Mr. Chadwick's inquiry opened at Windsor, where Mr. Charles Hodges, Assistant Overseer to the parish, supplied the information that was desired.

At the time in question the parochial affairs of Windsor were managed by a committee of twelve inhabitants and by the parish officers, the assistant overseer receiving a salary of one hundred pounds. When a poor person applied for permanent relief, the assistant overseer inquired into the circumstances of the case, and reported to the committee. Casualties were relieved by the overseer in pay. There were four overseers, and they each took it in turn for three months to pay all the parochial demands. In summer quarters the average casual relief was about seven pounds weekly; in winter it might be double that amount.

No labour was given to the paupers in Windsor excepting work on the roads. The men worked from six o'clock in the morning until five in the afternoon in summer, in the winter from seven until four. Single men were allowed a shilling a day, married men with two children one shilling and sixpence, men with larger families two shillings. About twelve men with large families had their rents paid by the parish. The parish authorities did not consider that twelve shillings a week was more than sufficient to maintain a labouring man and his family; and as private individuals did not give more than twelve shillings a week to a day labourer, and made no distinction between married and single men, the parish labourers had many advantages over industrious labourers who maintained themselves; they got the same wages, they got their rents paid, they got opportunities of picking up additional shillings, they worked less time, and they were relieved from the burden of looking out for work. If they thought they did not get enough wages, they would run to the magistrates for redress, which was a check to any strictness on the part of the overseers.

Industrious and independent labourers who had large families were reported to be prevented from throwing themselves upon the parish by only one thing, viz., the sense of degradation, and this was diminishing. The characteristic of the wives of paupers and their families was, that the wives were dirty, nasty, and indolent; the children, generally, neglected, immoral, and vagrants.

A striking contrast was obtained as to the condition of the wives and families of independent labourers. The wife and children were clean, and the cottage

tidy. In passing along a row of cottages, the transient observer could tell, in nine instances out of ten, Mr. Hodges deposed, which were paupers' cottages, and which were the cottages of independent labourers.

The chances of depauperising any of the paupers were pronounced practically hopeless unless very severe measures indeed were adopted. A family once on the parish was very difficult to get off; and there were instances of three generations of paupers. If overseers were severe in putting a stop to the system, they were open to the censures of the local magistrates and to the newspapers, so that in the course of nine years only about four out of thirty-four overseers were disposed to severity. Sometimes relief was refused to applicants unless they went into the workhouse, and as a large proportion declined to go into it, they were got rid of in that way.

In addition to the above-named advantages to the parish labourers, other advantages were shown to be derived from the attention of charitable ladies, who were cheated by them on all sides.

On the whole, the aspects of pauperism in Windsor, fifty-five years ago, were gloomy enough. It was shown in further evidence that applications for rents to be paid were so numerous, that the Committee were forced to refuse all new applicants; that a great number of artisans and labourers brought into the town by works carried on at the Palace increased the parochial difficulties; that four mechanics' clubs, which had greatly relieved the parish, had been broken up in consequence of the suspicion that the Government wanted to get hold of their money; that the savings

bank in the town was, apparently, not very flourishing; that two private funds in two establishments had relieved the parish, but that such trade clubs were not generally popular; and that various ancient charities led people to settle in the parish for the purpose of obtaining a share of the produce of those charities.

#### INQUIRY AT READING.

From Windsor the research was continued to Reading, in which town the various parochial officers were examined, the result of the examination showing that if several parishes were united they could afford to pay for the direction of the labour of the paupers for the whole of them. It also brought out that non-parishioners were more useful and of superior value as labourers than parishioners. Evidence from other parishes was adduced to show that non-parishioners were worth three or four shillings a week more than parishioners, because the non-parishioners had not the poor-rate to fly to. Some conception of the state of the outdoor poor in some of the agricultural parishes was conveyed by the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Cherry, of Burghfield, who stated that in comparing parish and private work many single men in his parish preferred six shillings a week for working on the roads or in the gravel pits to seven or eight shillings for working for the farmer.

Mr. Clift, the Assistant Overseer, gave stronger instances where men who received six shillings a week from the parish had refused nine shillings from the farmer.

This observation as to labour was pursued into

London parishes. If the authorities could get work for their able-bodied outdoor poor so as to make their condition less eligible on the whole than that of the independent labourer, what proportion of those who were chargeable to the parish would remain so, was the question put to the various officials. The answer was unanimous to the effect that, if such labour were instituted, scarcely any working paupers would remain.

In connection with this subject the causes of profusion of expenditure in dispensing parochial relief under the old system were examined, and were traced to be many in number. There was an uncontrollable facility and temptation to fraud in the administration of any out-door relief when not given in the shape of wages for labour. There was the ignorance of the annual officers and the operations of personal interests at variance with their duties. The fraud of parties receiving relief as being out of work when they are in work, or of continuing to receive relief after they have obtained work; of persons receiving out-door relief in money on account of sickness, and continuing to receive that relief after they have recovered; of women receiving relief on the ground that they have been deserted by their husbands while their husbands are living with them; of women receiving relief on pretence that their husbands are in search of work while they are in full work; of persons receiving pensions for relatives or children as if they were alive, while they are dead; of respectable classes of mechanics, whose work and means of living are tolerably good, obtaining outdoor relief.

## LAWRENCE WORKHOUSE, READING.

Returning to Reading, the condition of the poor in the workhouses there opens up a very interesting and curious piece of national history.

The workhouse contained from forty to fifty inmates,—men, women, and children,—who consumed seldom less than one hundred and fifty pounds of meat weekly. The bread was good, the table beer pronounced “excellent,” with a superior quality of the same beverage two years old and “potent,” reserved for the overseers after the performance of a dry day’s work. The place was clean, the inmates healthy. One inmate, a hale-looking man of sixty-three, had with his wife been on the parish more than forty years. On the whole the inmates were better off than the labourers, and better off than one-half of the ratepayers of the place out of the House; for they were well fed, had little work, and no responsibility. In the course of his inspection Mr. Chadwick found that the men’s rooms were all locked in order that the men might not come in and lie down before bed time; and this, not to escape from work, for there was none, but in order to prevent them coming up “to lollop about and roll about in their beds after dinner, or when they were tired of doing nothing.” Naturally enough this kind of life was not unpleasant. There were some who could not bear the regularity and preferred the dog’s life of hunger and liberty; but the majority never left, and most of these were undeserving characters who had been reduced to poverty by improvidence or vice.

The male and female paupers were separated in the night, but in the day the young girls and the

mothers of illegitimate children, and all classes, might meet and converse together in the yard.

In this same workhouse two old persons who had been in the workhouse the greater part of their lives were the progenitors of three generations of paupers living in the parish at a cost to the ratepayers of over one hundred a year.

The above is the description of one particular workhouse in which the condition of the inmates might be considered as favourable.

We shall find in the next chapter a description of a workhouse much less commendable.

### CHAPTER III.

#### RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

**P**ROFESSOR MASSON, in an extremely able paper on the work performed by Mr. Chadwick during the Poor Law Inquiry, points out that our author extracted from his researches these all-important truths. (a) *That the old Poor Law "contributed to make the condition of a pauper throughout more eligible in all material respects than the condition of an independent labourer;"* (b) *"The advantage of a large as compared with a system of small areas in the administration of legal relief."*

"Here," continues Professor Masson, "the results of his investigations were completely contradictory to the *à priori* opinion of various economists, including Mr. Macculloch. By narrowing the areas of relief, Mr. Macculloch held, the burthen of supporting the poor would be brought home more impressively to every man's door, so as to create a general desirousness on the part of all to keep down population, and thus reduce pauperism. According to Mr. Chadwick, facts did not bear out this notion, feasible as it seemed. Thus, in the hundred largest parishes of England, the proportion of paupers to the whole population was found to be 1 in 16, or  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. ;



in the hundred intermediate parishes it was 1 in 10, or 10 per cent.; while in the hundred smallest parishes it mounted to 1 in 6, or 16½ per cent. So also, while in the hundred largest parishes, the increase of pauperism during ten years had been at the rate of 1½ per cent., and in the hundred intermediate parishes at the rate of 2½ per cent., it had proceeded in the hundred smallest at the rapid rate of 8½ per cent. From these and other facts Mr. Chadwick contended that pauperism was more likely to be kept down by a system that should group parishes into large areas. One evident reason of this consisted in the fact, that in large areas the workhouse mode of relief could be more easily and rigorously upheld. Nor was the possibility of thus reducing the mass of pauperism the only argument in favour of such a system. As regarded the treatment of the paupers themselves, he maintained that the system would be more efficient. This view was supported by a glance at the state of the existing workhouses in almost all the smaller parishes of England. Thus, in the words of the General Report of the Commissioners:—

“The first difficulty (in the matter of workhouse management) arises from the small population of a large proportion of the parishes. Of the 15,535 parishes (including under that name townships supporting their own poor of England and Wales), there are 737 in which the population does not exceed 50 persons; 1,907 in which it does not exceed 100, and 6,681 in which it does not exceed 300. Few such parishes could support a workhouse, though they may have a poorhouse,—a miserable abode, occupied rent-free by three or four dissolute families mutually corrupting each other. Even the parishes

which are somewhat more populous,—those containing from 300 to 800 inhabitants, and which amount to 5,353 in number,—in the few cases in which they possess an efficient management, obtain it at a disproportionate expense. In such parishes, when overburdened with poor, we usually find the building called a workhouse occupied by sixty or eighty paupers, made up of a dozen or more neglected children (under the care, perhaps, of a pauper), about twenty or thirty able-bodied adult paupers of both sexes, and probably an equal number of aged and impotent persons, proper objects of relief. Amidst these, the mothers of bastard children and prostitutes live without shame, and associate freely with the youth, who have also the examples and conversation of the frequent inmates of the county gaol, the poacher, the vagrant, the decayed beggar; and other characters of the worst description. To these may often be added a solitary blind person, one or two idiots, and not unfrequently are heard from among the rest the incessant ravings of some neglected lunatic. In such receptacles the sick poor are often immured.’

“Now, in order to secure the possibility of a proper classification of the objects of relief, and, consequently, of a more careful attention to their individual wants—as regarded the young, to their education; as regarded the sick, idiotic, or lunatic, to their medical treatment, and so on—it was absolutely essential, Mr. Chadwick maintained, that such small parishes should be consolidated, and their paupers undertaken collectively in considerable masses. Other powerful arguments in his estimation, for the same system, were such as these: the comparative freedom from

jobbing and sinister influences that would be experienced in large districts; the greater economy that would be possible in management on the large scale; the greater likelihood of procuring efficient officers, and the greater encouragement that could be given to such by gradation of ranks; and the increased skill and experience that would be accumulated.

“A third point elucidated by Mr. Chadwick at great length in his report was the impolicy of the existing Law of Settlement. By a large amount of detailed evidence referring to special localities, it was shown that the Law of Settlement, chaining down masses of labour, as it did, to particular spots, instead of permitting it to circulate freely according to the law of demand and supply, was one of the most efficient instruments that could have been devised for perpetuating pauperism wherever it existed, for creating new masses of pauperism at new places, and for diffusing listlessness and want of energy through the labouring population of a country.”

#### SUMMARY.

These basic principles, so tersely stated by Professor Masson, form an excellent prelude to the summary which Mr. Chadwick presented to his colleagues, and which is here subjoined.

“1. That the existing system of Poor Laws in England is destructive to the industry, forethought, and honesty of the labourers; to the wealth and the morality of the employers of labour, and of the owners of property; and to the mutual good-will and happiness of all: That it collects and chains down

the labourers in masses, without any reference to the demand for their labour: That, while it increases their numbers, it impairs the means by which the fund for their subsistence is to be reproduced, and impairs the motives for using those means which it suffers to exist: And that every year and every day these evils are becoming more overwhelming in their magnitude, and less susceptible of cure.

“2. That of these evils, that which consists merely in the amount of the rates,—an evil great when considered in itself, but trifling when compared with the moral effects which I am deploring,—might be much diminished by the combination of workhouses, and by substituting a rigid administration and contract-management for the existing scenes of neglect, extravagance, jobbing, and fraud.

“3. That by an alteration, or even, according to the suggestion of many witnesses, an abolition of the Law of Settlement, a great part, or, according to the latter suggestion, the whole of the enormous sums now spent in litigation and removals might be saved; the labourers might be distributed according to the demand for labour; the immigration from Ireland of labourers of inferior habits might be checked; and the oppression and cruelty to which the unmarried labourers, and those who have acquired any property, are now subjected, might, according to the extent of the alteration, be diminished, or utterly put an end to.

“4. That, if no relief were allowed to be given to the able-bodied, or to their families, except in return for adequate labour, or in a well regulated workhouse, the worst of the existing sources of evil, the allowance-system, would immediately disappear; a broad

line would be drawn between the independent labourers and the paupers; the number of paupers would be immediately diminished, in consequence of the reluctance to accept relief on such terms; and would be still further diminished in consequence of the increased fund for the payment of wages occasioned by the diminution of rates; and would ultimately, instead of forming a continually-increasing proportion of our whole population, become a small, well-defined part of it, capable of being provided for at an expense less than one-half of the present poor-rates.

"5. That the proposed changes would tend powerfully to promote providence and forethought, not only in the daily concerns of life, but in the most important of all points—marriage.

"6. That it is essential to the working of every one of these improvements, that the administration of the Poor Laws should be entrusted, as to their general superintendence, to one central authority with extensive powers, and, as to their details, to paid officers, acting under the consciousness of constant superintendence and strict responsibility."

"These facts and recommendations," says Professor Masson, "corroborated as they were by the independent evidence furnished by the other Assistant Commissioners, the services of many of whom would deserve special notice, were, with hardly an exception, embodied in the general report prepared by the Commissioners themselves, and submitted to Parliament in February, 1834.

"Altogether the Report of the Commissioners, whether as a collection of particulars relative to

the state of society, a magazine of illustrations in political economy and the sciences of legislation and administration, or a code of rules and devices for reforming a bad system, was probably as remarkable a publication as had ever been given to the world.

"So evidently Parliament thought; for in the famous Poor Law Amendment Act, passed in August, 1834, the principal recommendations of the report were adopted and formularised. The piece-meal system of management by 15,000 distinct local sovereignties was abolished; and the administration of the whole pauperism of England and Wales placed under the control of a central Board of three paid Commissioners, sitting in London, and directly responsible to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Under these Commissioners, but appointed by Government, was to be a staff of nine Assistant Commissioners, each assuming the charge of a particular district. The central Board was to have the power of uniting parishes for administrative purposes; and from it all rules and regulations for the direction of the local bodies were to proceed. The administrative local bodies in the various unions were to consist of guardians annually elected by the ratepayers; but the masters of workhouses and other paid officers were to be under the orders of the Commissioners, and removable by them. The system of paying wages, or money in aid of wages, out of the rates was declared abolished; and, except in extraordinary cases, which were to be determined by the Commissioners, relief was to be given to able-bodied paupers only in the workhouse, and there in such manner and way as, while amply sufficient for

healthy subsistence, should still be so much less agreeable than the condition of an independent labourer of the lowest class, as not to tempt men unnecessarily to seek it. Finally, the Law of Settlement was modified somewhat after the recommendations contained in the report."

## CHAPTER IV.

### PRINCIPLES OF ACTION.



MR. CHADWICK by no means entered into the inquiry with confidence as to the adoption of executive measures on sound principles of administration. This want of confidence was occasioned by his view of the low conception of administration prevalent on the subject in Parliament at that time. The commission contained, however, some very eminent men, of whom the chairman, the Bishop of London, Dr. Blomfield, was said to be in judgment a model man for a Prime Minister. Mr. Senior was an eminent political economist, and Mr. Walter Coulson was a Government draftsman. The studies of our author on insurance and the casualties of sickness and mortality, on the administration of medical relief in France, on the urban and rural police force question, placed him in advance of the others in the rapidity with which he got at his points of examination and the readiness of their development.

The depressing forecast he had before him arose from the circumstance that men of high position, as cabinet ministers, were imbued with the doctrine of population introduced by Malthus.

Everywhere the increase of pauperism and of

burthens on the rates appeared to be due to the mal-administration of the legal provisions for compulsory relief, to the imbecility, or to the sinister interests of ignorant local administrators, and to the habits of the recipients of the rates induced by lax administration, rather than to the assumed inevitable pressure of a willing and capable working population, depending upon limited means of subsistence. His colleagues, some of them of strong preconceived opinions, yielded to this evidence, and to the concurrent testimony of other investigators to the like effect, while they, nevertheless, recognised as general conditions, that in all extensive communities, many untoward circumstances will occur in which an individual, by the failure of his ordinary means of subsistence, will be exposed to the danger of perishing; that to refuse relief, and, at the same time, to punish mendicity, when it cannot be proved that the mendicant could have obtained subsistence by labour, is repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind; and that to punish even depredation apparently committed as the only resource against want is equally repugnant.

Whilst under these conditions the Commissioners adopted as a settled principle that a legal provision of compulsory relief should be made to the able-bodied, they did not propose that it should be extended to more than the relief of indigence—to the state of a person unable to labour, or unable to obtain, in return for his labour, the means of subsistence. They did not propose to extend the provision to the relief of poverty, strictly so-called, that is, the state of one who, in order to obtain a mere subsistence, is forced to have recourse to

labour. They did not consider that a compulsory system of relief by the nation was available as a direct means, as some theoretical writers had assumed and had proposed, as a means of elevating the condition of the nation.

But the evidence collected appeared to establish as a conclusion for practical administration that a compulsory provision for the relief of the indigent can generally be administered on a sound and well-defined principle; and that under the operation of this principle the assurance that no one need perish from want, might be rendered complete, and the mendicant and the vagrant repressed by disarming both of their weapons,—the plea of impending starvation.

It was assumed, however, that in the administration of a compulsory system of relief, they were warranted in imposing such conditions on the individual relieved as might be conducive to the benefit either of the individual himself or of the community at large, at whose expense he had to be relieved. One primary condition was, that his situation, on the whole, should not be made really or apparently so eligible as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class. Every penny bestowed that tended to render the condition of the pauper more eligible than that of an independent labourer was accepted as a bounty on indolence and on vice.

One further primary condition of a sound system of relief was admitted to be established, viz., that the relief given should be entire—not partial relief. Any partial relief, any relief given in aid of wages, had, as respects the able-bodied labourer, an inevitable

tendency to reduce his motives for exertion; to lessen the productive power and value of his labour, to lower wages; to substitute parish doles for wages; and to destroy independence of character. They held that relief must be so given as to draw a clear and visible line between the paupers and the self-supporting classes.

Mr. Chadwick found that, in the administration of their own club funds, the working classes anxiously and laboriously applied this principle in the shape of a rule, that the recipients of relief should be either wholly on, or wholly off, the box, or the sick list. It is not absolutely necessary, however, that in the application of this principle relief should be given, as commonly supposed, in the workhouse. The pauper might be set on out-door work, and might receive out-door relief in return for work, provided that his whole time is occupied in working under proper superintendence, in return for this subsistence. He might be set on out-door work, as many of the able-bodied in Lancashire now are, strictly in compliance with the Statute of Elizabeth, provided it be under proper superintendence and security that his whole time is occupied in working in return for relief. The workhouse is the most convenient means of providing for fluctuating numbers of applicants, on occasions when they are too few to make it worth while to provide out-door work, or to employ special officers to superintend it.

It may be of interest to dispose of this doctrine by stating at once some facts on that law which he met with in the course of his earlier as well as of his later inquiries. In examining the allowance system of relief on account of the number of children in

families, he found that in the healthy rural districts, the intervals of birth were generally two years; so that where there were eight in a family, the eldest would be sixteen, the next fourteen years, the next twelve, and the next ten; and three, if not four, would be capable of contributing to their own livelihoods. But in the unhealthy urban districts the intervals of the births he found to be much shorter, and not generally to exceed a year. After a sweeping epidemic there was a remarkably quick reproduction. The mother who went on suckling her own child might do so for more than two years, whilst with the mother who lost her child, the conception appears to be immediate. On further and wider observation, especially in India, it appeared that, except in the case of most extraordinary visitations, the ordinary epidemic visitations did not check or really reduce the numbers of the population, which was assumed to be their effect, but only rendered the population weaker and more burthensome.

As to the economic effect of the increase of the population, he soon found evidence that increase, under good industrial condition, must actually diminish the pressure of population. At the time when Malthus wrote his work of alarm on the pressure of the population, the population of England, which is now over twenty-five millions, was ten millions. The example of Lancashire, which was then half a million, and is now two millions and a half of population, may serve as an example of the diminished pressure with the increase of the numbers of the population. It may be premised that the fact of a new comer obtaining wages, shows that over and above the cost of his own subsistence he obtains

a surplus that is a return to the wage finder, or work finder,—the capitalist who employs him. The more wages the workman gets, the more means of subsistence he gets, and the less is the pressure on the means of subsistence.

An instance of the progress may be thus stated. At the beginning of the century, the wages divided by a manufacturer near Lancaster, for spinning cotton, was 4s. 6d. per week per head of the working population; divided at that rate amongst a family of three,—man, wife, and one boy or girl,—it was about 14s. per week. Now from that same mill the wages that go to the cottage are 17s. per head, or for the family of three about £2 per week, or a hundred pounds a year. The cost of the sort of cotton spun at the beginning of the century (“shirtings No. 40”) was a shilling in the pound. It is now a halfpenny in the pound. This extraordinary reduction is effected by extraordinary improvements in the machinery, putting more and more of capital in single hands requiring more and more of discretion and skill, which is only to be got by more and more of intelligence of interest in the work, which again is only to be got by increased wages, which must be given, whatsoever may be the number of competing hands. The general result is that in the whole of that vast increase of population there is now the lowest cost of production at the highest cost in wages; and that process is yet going on.

In agriculture, it was positively predicted that, by the operation of a change from the Elizabethan law, wages must inevitably fall largely, and that the only safeguards would be a large provision for emigration. In Norfolk and Suffolk there were

thirty thousand men on the pauper rolls in receipt of out-door relief in aid of wages. They were all struck off, when the pauper dole was soon replaced by wages, and wages rose. They are now about one-third higher than they were then. Two get as much wages as three did then. And with the advance of steam power and more economical production, higher wages yet have been given. Out of a fleet of fifteen vessels provided for emigrants, a number only sufficient for one could be procured, and those were people who would mostly have gone of themselves, without any State provision.

In the common reasoning there went to the pressure of population an expenditure of upwards of six millions per annum in drink. As results of that pressure there were upwards of one hundred thousand cases of preventible deaths, and twenty times that number of cases of preventible sickness; while all the criminal and mendicant population were living, as was proved under the constabulary force inquiry, on twice the earnings obtainable by honest industry.

Mr. Chadwick found as the result of wide examination, that the successful administration of relief to the destitute poor requires a very high order of cultured judgment; in fact, the exercise of as high an order of science as medical science or chemical science; but as yet, and until specially developed, it is rare as a culture. Let the different opportunities be observed of obtaining administrative knowledge, available for local administration with no actuating sinister interest, with no party interest, and with no disposition to act otherwise than fairly on such knowledge as they may obtain by

culture, and good administrations will then be found.

Take the case of the elected respectable guardians of a Local Government Board, who are charged with the administration of relief to the destitute poor.

In urban districts this administration does not usually exceed half a day of a scattered attention at the weekly meeting of the Board. If it receive more than half a day's attention, it is accidental. An examination of the state of the knowledge possessed by guardians for the performance of their trust in the administration of the public moneys has led to singular results.

The following are the statements of some of the respondents (clergymen and gentlemen serving parochial offices in the Metropolis) to certain queries addressed to them. What can a family earn, and whether they can live on these earnings and lay by anything?

The answer from Chiswick stated that "a family might earn £49 per annum, on which they might live, but could not save." St. Anne and Agnes and St. Leonard, Foster Lane,—“Family might earn £60, but could not live on it.” St. Botolph Without, Aldersgate,—“Family might earn £63 18s., on which they might subsist, but could save nothing.” Mile End New Town and St. Mary's, Somerset, City of London,—“Family might earn £65, on which they might live, but could not save anything.” St. Leonard, Eastcheap,—“Family might earn £78, but could not save; cannot ascertain whether they could live upon it.” St. James, Westminster,—“Man might earn £78, besides material assistance from his wife and children; might live on wholesome food, but

cannot attempt to say whether they could save.” Holy Trinity the Less,—“Family might earn £93; might live on spare diet; could not save anything.” Mr. Baker, the Coroner and Vestry Clerk of St. Anne's, Limehouse, stated that “a family might earn £100 on which they could live but *not* save.” Hammersmith,—“A family might earn £49 8s., which would give them wholesome food, and they might and *do* save.

Facts such as these led to the concluding words of his first report, after the recital of the several recommendations, quoted in the last chapter:—

“And lastly, it is essential to the working of every one of these improvements that the administration of the Poor Laws should be entrusted, as to their general superintendence, to one central authority with extensive powers, and as to their details to paid officers acting under the consciousness of constant superintendence and strict responsibility.”

The services of the unpaid would be confined to systematised supervisory duties, similar to those of the visiting justices to the prisons. But he failed in attaining this improvement, and the initiative of relief in the hands of the unpaid was continued. There have been subsequent reclamations by petitions to Parliament from Guardians and from Chambers of Agriculture for the restoration of the rule as laid down in the report of 1833, and it is now held that there must be a return to that principle to secure an advance in administrative efficiency and economy.

Some illustrations may be given for the explanation of the opposite principles of administration. A guardian—a squire perhaps—says he knows that poor old body, a widow, and that she must have relief. He proposes half a crown in money weekly,



which will be economical, for if she is taken into the house it will cost five shillings weekly. He is unaware of the immense demand of half crowns or of the sort of cases that will arise out of the exceptional contravention of the correct administrative rule. The last exhortation of the Rev. Thomas Whately, the brother of Dr. Whately, the Archbishop of Dublin, and one of the ablest of practical political economists, was, "Do not flinch at striking off all the out-door allowances of all widowed and aged persons. I did so with all the widows and old persons in my parish, and all round I doubled their allowances by it." This result was what no one expected. How was it brought about? This poor old body had a brother who was a shopkeeper, and he allowed her eighteen-pence or two shillings a week rather than that she should go into the house; she had a son in place who allowed her a shilling a week; she had a daughter in place who allowed her another shilling; and she had also a connection who made another contribution. And so on with the rest; their contributions from family and friendly connections were all doubled. The effect of the out-door money relief is, as a rule, to suppress all such family or other social contributions. It suffices to know that an allowance is made from the parish, to suppress all others; it suppresses the claims of relationship and social claims of relationship and known conditions. The guardian is unaware of these facts, and their existence and operation will probably be only known or believed to exist by the intelligent and discreet permanent officer, who is aware that, as a rule, all of the wage classes of the population have relations or connections. If any destitute person has none, if he be truly a lone

person, then the well-regulated Union-house is certainly the best place for him, the most benevolent that can be practically provided.

On the occurrence of the cotton famine, labour, good real labour, sanitary work, earthwork, fairly paid, was provided for forty thousand of the destitute workers, but only seven thousand took to it. But what became of all the rest? The answer must be that they all had either relations or connections. The destitute cotton spinner might have had one brother who was a carpenter, another who was an ironworker, or others with whom he dined and whose aid was evoked until work could be got elsewhere, or until emigration could be provided. One fact was that the death-rate, instead of being augmented, was reduced to an extraordinary extent during that cotton famine.

The administrative maxim propounded by Mr. Chadwick, that the initiative of relief should be with permanent, responsible, and well-qualified paid officers, and that the unpaid officers should only be charged with supervisory functions, such as those of the visiting justices to prisons, has received several sufficient important trials. At many important unions, as at Manchester, Whitechapel, London, and several others, the initiative of the relief has been practically left to the chief paid officer, and the guardians have charged themselves only with the supervisory services as proposed. Manchester, in 1869, had as high a number as 24,000 out-door paupers. In that year the cost of out-relief was £3,000. In September, 1885, the number of the recipients was 943, and the cost of the out-door relief was £61. In the Whitechapel Union the

number of out-door paupers in the sixth week of the Lady Day quarter of 1870 was 6,758. The number in the corresponding week of 1885 was 74, inclusive of 49 boarded-out children, which for purposes of comparison should be deducted from the "out-door" and added to the "indoor," as they would otherwise be maintained in the District School. Deducting these 49 boarded-out children from 74, we have only 25 out-door paupers. In the former period in 1870 the amount expended in out-relief was £168 17s. 4d., whilst in the corresponding week of 1885, it was £4 8s. 1d. Added to Whitechapel is St. George-in-the-East, and also a rural union, St. Neots. The mean of the out-door paupers of these four unions was in 1871, 15,452; in 1884 the number was 1,928, showing a reduction of 13,524. If the rule had been prevalent in England, and the reduction in accordance with it, the total number of out-door paupers would be now 110,150, instead of 586,799.

The total expenditure for out-door relief in these four unions was in 1871, £44,064, and in 1884 it was £5,677. The increase of the number of the indoor paupers with the great reduction of out-door paupers was inconsiderable.

Hostility might assume that the consequence of such a large reduction of out-door relief to the destitute must be a large increase of crime. On the contrary, it has been distinctly proved in Whitechapel that the criminal business of the police offices there has been reduced by one-half the former amount. The vices of pauperism have at every point been reduced by the operation of the principle.

## CHAPTER V.

### ORIGINAL OUTLINE OF POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION.

**I**T was impossible that so serious a change could take place in the social organisation of England as that which was produced by the new Poor Law, and could pass into operation without severe criticism. The change was sudden, although it extended over what was really a considerable period of time, because the people were not prepared for it; and, as it came out that Mr. Chadwick was the leading spirit in that change, so the feeling against it was directed far more against him than his colleagues.

It is just to explain in these memoirs that if what he designed originally had been carried out in full, no such objection to his methods would have been taken. But changes were made after the labours of his colleagues and of himself were completed, in which changes, most of the most objectionable details of administration, were brought forth.

I have before me at this moment a draft of "Measures proposed with Relation to the Administration of the Poor Laws," which Mr. Chadwick drew up for the Cabinet. It is a singular historical document on many grounds. It contains perhaps the

first use of the word "guardians," as designating a Board of representatives chosen annually by the ratepayers of the several parishes united into a union for the superintendence of the poor, together with some other definitions of curious interest. The most important paragraph, however, to which I would draw particular attention, is the following, in which the author describes the proposed Union workhouse, then only a prospective institution.

"The towns comprehending several parishes, and the rural districts comprehending several parishes, in each of which there is already a workhouse, admit of a superior management under an incorporation in which several workhouses will be combined under one management. Thus, when a town which contains four or five parishes, each with its respective workhouse, is incorporated, each house may be exclusively appropriated to a particular class of paupers. The old and impotent might be placed in one house by themselves; the whole of the pauper children may be placed in another house; the able-bodied females may be placed in a third of the workhouses; and the able-bodied males may be placed in the fourth house, the best adapted for discipline and regulation. Each class may thus receive an appropriate treatment: the old may enjoy their comforts, the children may be educated properly for service, and discipline and rigour may (not by the Legislature or the Government, but by the Commissioners' regulations) be concentrated, to stop the influx of pauperism from the able-bodied. It is found very difficult in one small workhouse to introduce any system of management adapted to the various classes maintained within it, and utterly impossible to maintain any classification;

but, by a combination of workhouses under an incorporation, a classification, to the extent of the number of workhouses included, may be made without any additional expense, with all the economy of extended or wholesale management, and with many advantages which are not obtainable when the whole of the various classes of paupers are brought under one roof."

The course suggested in the above extract was the view of the Commissioners, most strongly of the Chairman of the Commission, Bishop Blomfield. It was believed by the Commission that the amendment of the vestral administration, by the separation of their mischievous admixtures, and by providing for each class separate buildings, would be a great and lasting reformation. For the children it would provide separate schools away from the influence of the depraved paupers; for the old and infirm, institutions of the character of almshouses; for the sick, hospitals; for the lunatics, the blind, and the idiots, proper establishments; and for the able-bodied and the vagrants a distinct suitable building. But all this plan was overborne by one started within the Executive Commission of treating the separate classes in separate wards of the same house, the Union house, under one chief manager. The separate system was the most difficult. It required services of specialists in administration which could not readily be obtained. For the treatment of the pauper children by school teachers on the mixed physical and mental training, the teachers had then all to be trained. For the aggregation of cases for the purpose of segregation and the special treatment of the segregated cases suggested by Mr. Chadwick, undivided individual

power was requisite. But he had none. All the Assistant Commissioners—lawyers and soldiers mostly—went in for the Union house, and he was driven to adopt it. But time and arising experiences present increasing vindications of the original principle. In the administrative arrangements for the relief of the sick in the Metropolis, he preferred, from study, those of Paris, with its securities for the superior qualification of officers by the *concours*, and with its system of admission, with the control of all the beds, and the power of directing the application of the highest order of specialists to the relief of the poorest in need. In London the state of departmental knowledge has been displayed in dispensing with the requisite securities for skill in administration. After severe experiences of the injuries done to children by bringing them up in the same building with depraved paupers, efforts were made, chiefly by Mr. E. Tufnell, for their rescue, and powers were obtained, unfortunately clogged by the consents of the guardians, for the formation of districts of unions, to which the orphan children from the Union houses might be taken. Of 30,000 children some 11,000 or 12,000 were rescued, and a foundation laid for that half-time principle of mixed mental and physical training which now promises, on grounds hereinbefore stated, to change the entire system of elementary education.

In time also, lunatics, as well as the solitary blind, were removed from the Union workhouse, and the rooms for the able-bodied were generally kept largely free of occupants.

The services of the unpaid parish overseers have been substituted by paid overseers,—generally, it is true, with imperfect functions, executed under in-

ferior directions. Nevertheless, the economies accruing from the application of paid service cannot be less than some three millions per annum. With the full application of the responsible initiative as displayed in the examples cited of Manchester, Whitechapel, and the other unions, with other collateral economies, further reductions of local burthens under an improved administration on the principle of unity of action, may, it is conceived, from progressive examples, be confidently anticipated for the future.

It is but fair to state these facts in regard to the chief originator of the modern Poor Law system. It was at first said of him as a reproach for his suggestion of separate homes for separate classes, that he would, if he might have his own way, make such an aggregation of idiots from the whole kingdom as to have created an "Idiotopolis." In fact, his plan was to deal even with idiots in such a scientific way that they should learn, according to their limited capacities, some semi-automatic work, that should be at once to them a source of amusement and a source of usefulness. In this suggestion we have the highest humanity combined with the purest science,—a method surely far superior to that which left the idiot in the parish workhouse to be the helpless butt and scorn of those who were just sufficiently above him in intelligence to be his masters and tormentors.

So in regard to the indigent blind. The idea of removing these from the rest of the indigent in their infantile stages of blindness, of placing them in comfortable separate homes, and under medical care by which many of them might be cured of

their blindness, and in which again many permanently blind might be taught some useful occupation, was surely an idea deserving of the warmest commendation.

Again, in respect to the lunatics of the United Kingdom belonging to the indigent community, can it be doubted that it was an idea of the greatest mercy to propose to remove them from the crowded workhouse, or from the barns, sties, and huts in which they were too often imprisoned by their families, and to place them in grand asylums where, under scientific supervision, they would be classified and treated in such a manner as to be made happy in themselves, where that was possible, and of some service to others as well as themselves, where that was possible?

Lastly, in respect to the young criminal classes spread out in the thousands of old parish workhouses and parishes, was it not a truly noble as well as philanthropic suggestion that they should be lifted, bodily as it were, out of the environments of iniquity in which they were imprisoned, into the good and active life of the scholastic institution, where mental work, physical work, and healthy play would all combine to transform the most unfortunate representative of our race of children into an intelligent, active, happy, and healthy being?

Indeed, as we survey the change that has taken place in English social life since the leading spirit of the new Poor Law system commenced his arduous task, we see that his ideas have all indirectly come into acknowledged repute as well as operation. The asylums for idiots, for the blind, and for the insane, the industrial schools and the reformatories for the

criminal classes, are so many monumental proofs of the correctness of his views and the breadth of his intelligence. They date from the great change of 1834, as distinctly as political advancements date from the Reform Bill of 1832. They have been introduced, no doubt, on a different principle of human action than that by which he was moved. They have sprung rather from educated sentiment than from educated reason, as disjointed efforts, seeming to be a response to a pure voluntary desire to do good—efforts springing from the heart of humanity. Mr. Chadwick's objects were for the same end, projected systematically, and springing from the head not less than the heart. His desire was to do at once by the force of law, and by what may be considered a beneficent tyranny, that which is being done by slow development and sympathetic progression.

Which method is the best is a question which I leave the reader to decide, according to his own taste and judgment.

One word more in closing this chapter. Mr. Chadwick has been severely commented upon for having, it is believed, suggested the separation of married couples in the Union workhouse. It is but justice to him to say, firstly, in respect to this matter, that the majority of his colleagues on the Commission were at one with him; and, secondly, that he was opposed from the first to the separation of those married couples who had passed beyond the period of age in which they would be likely to cause an increase in the numbers of the indigent community. The law which separated younger married couples in the workhouse was suggested by the evils which were

too manifest under the old system, by which the workhouse became the birthplace of a great pauper population. And, tender as our sympathies may be for individual liberty, we must, on reflection, feel that the general good was consulted in the enactment, although it has received such severe and sustained criticism.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SUMMARIES ON POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION.

**I**N closing the part of these volumes which treats on the Prevention of Pauperism, I select some passages from various essays bearing on topics to which Mr. Chadwick has drawn attention with special care and precision.

In an article, published in 1837, on the "Principles and Progress of the Poor Law Amendment Act," he illustrated the nature of the central control and improved local administration introduced by the new statute. The article bristles with points of practical interest belonging to the time in which it was written, and in some matters it is even yet instructive as indicating the existence of grave errors that have not as yet been removed. I select a first example, in which it is argued that, by systematising management, unpaid services may be dispensed with, and fitting officers duly paid may be advantageously substituted for unpaid.

#### PAID SERVICE THE BEST SERVICE.

"As the arts advance, as competition becomes more active—we may say, as society advances—individual attention becomes concentrated, and the leisure of the labouring and middle classes diminishes.

“ We deem it an improvement that fewer uncultivated people are now idle; although, wherever the present leisure time of any class is not marked by sensual excess, we think it desirable that that leisure should be extended for profitable cultivation. The leisure of the educated classes diminishes from another set of causes, namely, from the increasing attraction of literary and scientific pursuits, and from the increasing demands upon their attention, for the successful performance of the more private duties. Look at the increasing number of scientific societies, of public companies yielding profit, each engaging the attention of numerous active minds! Observe also the increased attention which is required to discharge properly the business of a landowner, or of the manager of capital! It will not be denied that public business also, when properly executed, becomes more complex and laborious. The sense of its difficulty too frequently deters those from undertaking it who are the best qualified; whilst the ignorant, who perceive no requisites, impelled by vanity or the torments of *ennui*, the disease of unfurnished minds, rush in and seize the most important trusts. When we have excepted those who have good fortunes, and who make public business a study for professional purposes, it may be said that the fact of any one but a young and untried man having much time to spare is daily becoming stronger evidence of intellectual barrenness and inferiority.

“ In the case of persons who have no property and no visible means of livelihood, yet have much spare time for attention to public business, the presumption is of a more serious character. These circumstances which occasion the withdrawal of the educated classes

from the performance of voluntary trusts, leave large fields of public service open to the ignorant and vain, or to the unprincipled and rapacious; and the evil is not confined to the local administration. The local oligarchies, aggregated of the worst elements, mischievously affect the higher political representation. Having no perception of elevated principles, and no use or care for them, except as means of promoting their personal interests or base gratifications; having no high social purposes, and no moral dignity themselves, they have little appreciation of it in others. If we see instances of large constituencies represented in the supreme legislative assembly by men publicly tried and convicted, and publicly known to be guilty of offences of great moral turpitude, we at once assume that each of these members will be found to have been brought forward and mainly returned by means of hands destitute of real character, who have imposed him, as well as themselves, upon the multitude, who are too much intent upon their individual business to attend to the business of the community.

“ But whether or not we have indicated the proper causes, which appear to be of an importance requiring the most careful analysis and exposition, the fact undeniably is, that the state of things presents a stronger necessity of economising the demand for all good unpaid service, and for appointing paid officers to perform all functions requiring continuous and well-sustained application. Each individual man can give to the administration of the affairs of a multitude of others, no more than casual and, therefore, superficial attention, fraught with error. The best public policy is, therefore, to economise the demands for extraordinary merit; and, to concentrate respon-

sibility on those who have the best means of bearing it; those who give continuous attention to the performance of their duties, namely, the paid officers."

In another place he gives the following graphic description of a very important social change in our national life.

#### THE EMANCIPATION OF PAUPERISED AND SERF LABOURERS.

"At the time of the passing of the Reform Bill, and when the Liberals came into power, the condition of the agricultural labourers was most wretched, especially in the southern counties. Their wages were low, and their labour inferior and unproductive, and relief was given in lieu of wages under a system which created a large part of the evil to be relieved, and did not relieve all it created. The labourer who did little got his dole, and he who did much got no more. The labourer rarely could get work, if he sought it, out of his parish; and whilst the labourer was confined to his parish, and generally to his farm, the farmer was confined to his labourer. It was practically a system of serfage or slave labour, and a capitalist who bought a parish, practically as much bought the labourers of the parish as he bought the rabbits of the parish. Improving farmers from the North have, where they could, generally brought their labourers with them. When they could not change the labour, and have been confined to the pauperised parish labour, they have refused to take farms in the South, even at greatly reduced rents.

"Out of the conditions then prevalent 'Swing' fires went through the pauperised districts. Conservative statesmen declared that they could do nothing with the evil, and practically acknowledged it to be beyond their legislative capacity. Peel and Wellington both abandoned it.

"Indeed, their conception was that the poor man—the agricultural labourer—'must be poor,' must have a life-long support on parish doles, must have his relief as a parish pauper; that his future was a parish poorhouse, and when he died he must have a parish funeral in a pauper's grave. The condition was admitted to be sad, but one that could not be altered, and the evil must be endured. Any alterations of the common conditions tending to the reduction of parish allowances in aid of wages were, indeed, denounced as cruelties.

"The Liberal Government grappled with the difficulty, and appointed a great commission, which probed the evil to the core; and the Government adopted the principles of legislation and administration elaborated by it, and succeeded in their extensive application as against the main evils affecting the working classes. The labourer was emancipated from the thralldom of the parish pay-table, and from confinement, by the Law of Settlement, to the parish, and of parochial administration.

"He has, indeed, by the operation of law, been made a free man.

"At the same time the relief to the really destitute has been largely improved at every point, and the burthens on the ratepayers have been greatly reduced."



## TRAINING OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

We have seen in the essays on education the active part our author has taken in the education of children in the pauper schools. In like manner, as Secretary of the Poor Law Commission, he was busily occupied in framing the outlines of the important report on the training of pauper children, which appeared in 1840. He had already laboriously examined into the position of the English labourers all round,—those belonging to different counties, those connected with agricultural and manufacturing work, Irish and English; soldiers and sailors, educated and uneducated,—in comparison of efficiency with the same classes in foreign countries.

In the report above referred to, the influence of the information he had thus obtained is excellently brought out in the evidence taken by him from Mr. Albert G. Escher, of Zürich, a witness already alluded to in a previous page. In this evidence he extracted from the witness the curious statement, that the natural intelligence of workmen, as distinguished from any intelligence imparted by the labours of the schoolmaster, shone out, first, in the Italians, next, in the French, and, lastly, in the northern nations, including the English. The Italians' quickness of perception, it was said, is shown in rapidly comprehending any new descriptions of labour put into their hands, of quickly comprehending the meaning of their employer, of adapting themselves to new circumstances, much beyond what any other classes have. The French workmen have the like natural characteristics, only in a somewhat lower

degree. The English, Swiss, German, and Dutch workmen, have all very much slower natural comprehensive faculties.

In further evidence it was adduced that Scotch workmen abroad got on much better than the English, for the reason that they were better educated in their youth; and this, in short, was the meaning of the whole inquiry to elicit, as it did, the fact, that the true way, and the only way, of raising the English artisan in the social scale is to educate him in his early youth.

## IDEAS FOR PREVENTING DISTRESS DURING PERIODS OF DEPRESSION.

On September 26th, 1864, Mr. Chadwick delivered an address at York, as President of the Section of Economy and Trade of the Social Science Association. The address bore on the cotton famine, the event of that day; but there are certain parts of it bearing both on manufactures and on agriculture which, as they are as worthy of notice now as they were twenty-three years ago, are herewith subjoined.

## DISTRESS IN MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS.

“An important subject before us is, What may be done socially or by legislation for the improvement of the present manufacturing population? What may be done for the population which is coming, to prevent or mitigate the social and economical evils attendant upon the past? And, first, what may be done to avert or mitigate the periodical recurrence of distress, and outcries for external sympathy and aid;

for, although it is to be hoped that nothing so extraordinary may again occur, as that which has arisen from the large loss of the supply of raw material—cotton—yet experience warrants the anticipation of recurring disturbances from over-production, from under-consumption, from bad harvests, from changes of fashion, and from improvements in machinery. Change must, therefore, be regarded as a normal condition of our manufactures to be provided for in the interests of ratepayers, as well as of the employed.

“In addition to the improvement which is to be looked for from an extension of several sources of the supply of the raw produce, as a means of preventing for the future the violent shocks and inconveniences occasioned by an almost exclusive dependence on one supply, there is a lesson of domestic prudence, on the like principle, the expediency of which, for families of the wage classes, ought to be strongly impressed upon them; namely, to avoid, as much as they can, having all the working members of the same family engaged in the same manufacture. The intensity and bitterness of the late suffering in these districts have been proportionable to the exclusive occupation of neighbourhoods as well as families with one manufacture. In places where cotton mills were isolated, or where those engaged in the manufacture have only formed a minority in the manufacturing population, members of the same family were more frequently engaged in different trades. If there was only one member of a family, or of a circle of relations, out of three, engaged in the paralysed occupation, he commonly derived aid from the other two of his relations who were in full work; if not in money, in a share of their meals. But for such family and friendly

assistance from friends amongst fellow-workmen, the public pressure of the late famine would have been far more severe. I learned from the Continent that the shock had fallen there heavily or lightly in proportion as there had been a mixture of employments. The lesson taught, as to the distribution of members of the same family in different occupations, is in accordance with the common household proverb, ‘Not to have all your eggs in one basket.’ The expediency of this recommendation is disputed in the interests of manufacture; and there certainly are economical advantages in the aggregation of establishments of the same sort; but if that aggregation be maintained, those interested in it should be called upon to provide against its dangers and evils, or at least to promote actively the measures necessary to avert them. One of these evils is the long-continued congestion of unemployed labourers, on occasions of manufacturing depression. Early training and education, and the development of the intelligence and capacities for ready changes of employment, is one means of reducing these congestions.

“Few who have not had experience in the administration of relief to the destitute in periods of wide distress can be fully sensible of the difference in amount of trouble and chargeability to the ratepayers, between educated and intelligent, and uneducated and unintelligent people of the wage class—the heavy lumpishness of the uneducated, their abject prostration, their liability to misconception, and to wild passion, their frequent moroseness and intractability, and the difficulty in teaching them, as compared with the self-help of the better educated, who can write and inquire for themselves, and find out for them-

selves new outlets and sources of productive employment, which no one else can find out for them, and who can read for themselves, and act upon written or printed instructions. The really well-trained, educated, and intelligent, are the best to bear distress; they are the last to come upon charitable relief lists, and the first to leave them. They are most easily helped. I remember when we promoted the migration of the surplus southern agricultural labourers to the north, that there were villagers in places who had heard of America and were willing to go there, but had not heard of Lancashire, and could not be got to move there, even on the promise of largely increased wages, until they had sent one of their own people to see what sort of people they were in Lancashire, and return and inform them. The uneducated workmen in Lancashire are more intelligent, but, if we are to believe a story told of some of them, they have been led to America by a recruiting song, the chorus of which was—

“ ‘ And we will drink at every ale-house what we do come nigh,  
Until that we get to the North Ameriki.’ ”

“ Instead of being kept crowded, as the adult workers recently were, in schools, to remedy the gross defects of elementary education, to teach them reading, and to keep them from hanging about the streets exposed to disorder, they would, if they had already been properly educated, have been abroad seeking occupations for themselves, for which their elementary education might qualify them. On a former occasion some got engaged in the police force, for which reading and writing are necessary. One operative, who could read and write well, left

his fustian jacket at home, put on his best Sunday clothes, and went about to inquire for a shopman's place, or a clerk's place, which he succeeded in getting, and did well in. A great deal of the good conduct of the operatives has been owing to the extent to which elementary education in, and the partial application of, the factory half-school time system has leavened the mass of workpeople; difficulties and disturbances have arisen entirely with the ill-educated.

“ When I talk of education, I presume an acquaintance with the different sorts of it, from the positively worthless to the better qualities in which the results, practical, moral, and physical, in combination with proper training, are proved to be most satisfactory; from the inferior education in which, I have elsewhere shown, not one in three turn out well, to the superior training, in which there are not more than two per cent. of failures. The general and complete compulsory application of the half-time principle of school teaching by good teachers, combined with early physical training, may be urged as a means of obviating future prolonged chargeability, from manufacturing changes and reverses such as those of the past. I add physical training, because to enable a manual labourer to turn his hand to anything easily, he should be early trained physically to turn his fingers as well as his hands to any work. The future of the wage classes will lie in large manufacturing processes, in which there must be action in concert; for this the military drill has great value by imparting habits of order, prompt attention, and exact obedience to command. Systematised physical training imparts aptitude for every sort of manual occupation.

It is now proved that by it three persons may be fitted to be as effective in ordinary labour as five who are untrained; an economy of force which is of peculiar importance in itself, most especially to these districts, to meet an impending serious scarcity of labour.

“Another course for the prompt and salutary reduction of congestions of labour is the removal of such barriers to the circulation of labour, as those created by the law and practice of apprenticeship, in its arbitrary requirement of a seven years’ bondage—for it is a slave labour condition, that is, labour without immediate interest in the work, and at the command of another—inducing slavish and slow habits of work in prolonging for years the learning of processes which might be learned in a few months.

#### ON AGRICULTURAL DISTRESS.

Agricultural Associations generally confine themselves to the discussions of questions of progress in agricultural art. The discussion of questions of agricultural economy appears to be deemed out of place there, and even the education of agricultural labourers, which is so important to the progress of agricultural art itself, is little entertained by them. But here the general survey of the whole field of labour and production will be deficient if the great agricultural portion, from which manufactures draw so largely, be passed without examination or notice. The same economical principles pervade the entire fields, though under varied conditions, which it will be advantageous to both to observe. Extensive land agents and successful land improvers who are con-

versant with manufacturing economy are wont to express their wish that land should be taken in hand by men of manufacturing habits, which include the economical principles applied in manufactures. It has been confidently declared to me by practical men, that the application of the like principles would be eventually attended by the like wages and profits in agriculture as in manufactures, and I believe it may be made evident that they would. In examining the general condition of agriculture, we cannot fail to be struck with its comparatively slow rate of progress.

“The principles of the subsoil drainage of land, for example, have been demonstrated in practice for more than a quarter of a century, and I know from official sources that under all varieties of rude and imperfect work, such drainage repaid itself in from four to ten years; yet of the land requiring drainage, after all that has been said, not more than some fifteenth part has yet been drained. Five years may now be taken as the average period of repayment for proper land drainage works. Manufacturing economy would not linger long in availing itself of such results. In the course of some investigations to get quickly at the knowledge of the places where drainage works were most neglected, I once asked a candle manufacturer in London from whence the greatest quantity of their rushes were got for rushlights. ‘From Lancashire and Cheshire,’ was the answer. That is, from the vicinity of the great manufactures. In an agricultural report it was declared not long ago, that two-thirds of Cheshire was too wet to bear sheep. Land drainage ought indeed to be pointed out as a great field of most

salutary and suitable work for the employment of the unemployed in the cotton districts. In the rural villages old men and women, bent and withered with rheumatism from working in wet fields and living in damp cottages, are considered regular subjects for the exercise of artistic skill and sympathy.

An outcry has recently been raised, founded upon official medical examination by Dr. Edward Smith, on the great need of milk for the use of the town population, and especially for children. In our report of 1842 I stated, with reference to the sewerage of the Metropolis, — which was then equivalent in population to that of all Lancashire—that taking the rate of production even from the wasteful method of applying the sewerage of Edinburgh, by submersion, the refuse now thrown away would serve to feed no less than 218,000 cows annually. If the more economical method of applying liquid manure, pointed out in the official minutes of information which I was enabled to prepare in 1851, and which were laid before Parliament in 1852, by which a quantity of water or liquid manure equal to a heavy thunder-shower may be thrown on any sort of culture at a rate of a shilling an application per acre, and the formation of sewer marsh surfaces be avoided—a double production would be obtained.

“Added to the immense waste of the town manures, there is a general waste (an increasing number of model farms excepted) of all the liquid farm-yard manures, as well as of two-thirds of the effect of all the solid farm-yard manures (as demonstrated in the minutes to which I have referred), from their application in defective methods. This general waste of the farm-yard manures has been estimated by good

agriculturists as equivalent in itself to another rental of the land.

“Such are the present common conditions of the fields of agriculture, besides those of manufactures, for the application of economical principles. One of the available principles is that which I call of *intensive* as compared with *extensive* production, of the heaviest amount of produce from high culture on narrow areas of land as against thin production from low culture on wide areas. M. Lecouteux corroborated this in his ‘*Principes de la culture améliorante*,’ that by applying different doses of manures in the proportion of nine, of fourteen, and of twenty respectively to the same areas of land, the prime cost of raising a quarter of wheat was brought down from 40s. to 32s., and from 32s. to 17s. per quarter, rent included. Now this reduction in price was gained by the adoption of the economical principle, the operation of which I have already described in manufactures, namely, of distributing the fixed establishment charges over the greatest amount of gross produce. Thus, if the acre which only produced twenty bushels hitherto is made to produce forty, the double quantity will only have half the fixed charges upon it of rent, rates, roads, hedges, buildings, etc. But the greatest economical result to be looked forward to in agriculture is in the increase in the ‘intelligent force’ applied to it. The striking advance of the cotton manufacture is, certainly, due mainly to the great bulk of the labour being on the piece-work principle, and to the ease with which it is applied. Cotton manufactures could not, indeed, be worked as farms are by day work. An instance has recently been mentioned to me of a

family of agricultural labourers who had become mill workers, and, of course, trained in piece-work; but having been thrown out of employment during the late famine, had offered to, and had been engaged to do agricultural work, such as getting off crops, as piece-work, at less than would have been paid for day work to attain the same object, and were believed to have paid themselves well. I have been informed of other instances of the same sort. Agricultural labourers also, who have joined gangs of navvies, and have been drilled with them into their energetic piece-work habits, on returning to farm labour, will do their tasks of work in half the time of the common day labourers. Examples of the highest order of agricultural piece-work, with increased wages, closely approaching to manufacturing wages, are presented in market-garden culture near the metropolis.

“A great economical and social improvement would be consequent on emigration or migration if farmers could be got to apply the piece-work principle in each case of the departure of one labourer by saying to two others: ‘Now, Brown is going, and I propose to put you two, Jones and Robinson, chiefly on task work, and divide his wages between you, if you will make it worth my while by also dividing his work and doing it well between you.’ This, with the younger workers, would meet with a hearty response. This is a topic for a large economical exposition. Recently in France, at a model farm for the trial of sewage manure, situated near to Paris, I had the advantage of a discussion upon it with the director of the farm, Professor Moll, the most eminent scientific agriculturalist perhaps in Europe, and also with Mr. Amerfoort, the Mayor of Haarlem, who

conducts the chief model farm in Holland. It was declared by Professor Moll that economical progress in agriculture was only practicable on the piece-work principle. Mr. Amerfoort concurred, and he gave me the following examples of payments for results, in addition to ordinary wages, which he assured me were working exceedingly well:—The steam-plough is introduced on his model farm, and over and above the regular wages a certain extra payment is made for each hectare which is pronounced to be well ploughed; the payment being divided between the engineman and ploughman and boys in attendance. The horse-keeper, over and above his fixed wages, has a payment for each living foal got from a mare; the cowkeeper has an extra allowance for each living calf got; the shepherd an extra allowance for each lamb sold, or living six weeks after it is born; the poultry keeper an extra allowance upon each hundred eggs delivered to the housekeeper, and upon each cock or hen sold; and the dairymaid an extra allowance for each lot of butter and cheese sold, without reasonable objection to its quality from the purchaser. On this particular farm the cereals are at once worked up into bread for sale. The baker on the establishment has a fixed wage allowance, for which, however, he must sell not less than a given quantity of bread. For all he sells above a given quantity he has a percentage. Fines for irregularities, coming late, or neglecting horses, are put into a common fund, which is every quarter divided equally amongst all the men, so that the punctual and diligent have an interest in looking after the laggards.

“This system, I am assured, works at Haarlem

and elsewhere, as persons conversant with manufactures would expect it to work. The heavy, stolid agricultural action is replaced by a vivacious outlook and intelligence. The food manufacturer is saved the labour and distraction of superintendence and incessant fault-finding for carelessness. With us, the benighted law of partnership would prevent the baker and other servants being made responsible for losses as well as shares in the profit, making them partners, and rendering the employer liable in his whole property for the defaults of each. The amendment of this law would be of especial importance for the gentleman farmers and land improvers, who cannot give that laborious attention to details, and to checking piece-work, on which agricultural success mainly depends, and who must be dependent on farm bailiffs and stewards.

“The increasing emigration to America from Ireland, and the continued flow to our colonies from England, and the demands from the general labour market in towns, have begun to render labour scarce in agriculture in some districts, and under the pressure of inconvenience or distress from that scarcity, to extend the use of labour-saving machines. Steam ploughing has fairly ‘turned the corner of profit.’ The demand for ‘intelligent force’ promises to be accompanied by larger demands for ‘intelligent directors of force.’ Hitherto there has been as much successful labour-saving machinery unused in the agricultural districts, as there is of such machinery used, and mechanical force unused is unused from the want of intelligent directors of it. Even in manufactures intelligence is scarce and deficient for the direction of steam-force. Mr. Fair-

bairn showed some time ago that as much power was obtained from one pound of coal in Cornwall, where the working of steam-engines is chiefly on the piece-work principle, as in Manchester from five. Improvements have since been made, but the smoke is the outward and visible sign of wasteful work. An intelligent engineman will work a locomotive with half the coal used by one who is unintelligent. In one instance, where the enginemen were put upon the piece-work principle, that is, were paid for the amount of power they obtained out of a given quantity of coal, the reduction of the consumption of coal was from thirty down to seventeen. But, in general, employers are not at the pains to get registries or to attend to them. The application of the piece-work principle would reduce the general consumption of coal enormously. Where the causes of steam boiler explosions are ascertained, they are generally found to have been the result of unintelligent direction. Mr. Fairbairn has long urged the necessity of an augmentation of the intelligence for the direction of force, by improved elementary instruction. If the want of intelligent direction for force be great for manufactures, it is still greater for agriculture. It is well known that steam-engines scarcely ever do the duty in the farmyard that they do in the yard of the maker. I have been informed by a firm which lets out steam-power for agriculture, that it is always conditional that they send men whom they know, and can make responsible for the working of their engines, for they cannot trust their engines in such hands as are at present to be got amongst farm servants.

“To obtain more intelligent forces and directors of

force needed for agriculture, it will be requisite to provide suitably for them in respect to habitations. At present in England, from the distances of the labourers' habitations from the farms, it often happens that a large proportion of the labourer's force is used up in walking to and from the field where he is to apply it. His force and that of his family is further wasted by the disease consequent on overcrowding, and by the inferior sanitary condition of his dwelling. In agriculture as in manufactures, it will be found to pay to have improved habitations in connection with places of work, not indeed in direct rent, any more than farmhouses pay in direct rent apart from the land, but as practical additions to wages, and as means of obtaining and keeping a respectable, intelligent, and steady description of labourers.

"The economical principles which I have indicated as evolved by the progress of machinery in manufactures, may be expected to be attendant on the extended use of machinery in agriculture. On impartial examination, on economical grounds, it will, I conceive, be found, that the fitting intelligence needed to be combined with productive manual force, as well as to direct mechanical force needed in agriculture as also in manufactures, must be obtained by improved elementary instruction in the schoolroom, combined with the interest which stimulates intelligence on the half-school time principle in agriculture. Parents of the wage classes on the one side, and employers on the other, have to be informed that by proper training the value of the young, as intelligent force, may be augmented by at least one-fifth, and as 'intelligent directors of force' by more than one-third.

"If the advanced economical principles deducible from the progress of production in manufactures be applied to an improved production in agriculture, as by the reduction of establishment charges, by high cultivation and the extended use of labour-saving machines, whilst in manufactures production will be increased, prices to the consumers will be reduced, wages will be advanced, and the net profits of the capital will be augmented. The concurrent advance of agricultural as well as manufacturing production will be attended on the one hand by improved demands, and on the other by improved supplies between more intelligent populations, with mutual physical, moral, and social elevation."

#### MEDICAL RELIEF TO THE DESTITUTE POOR.

We have seen that in his original scheme for the amended Poor Laws, Mr. Chadwick proposed what he called the segregation of different classes of the poor in opposition to the principle of aggregation in one large building. That he was correct in this view, the experience of the working of the Act as it was passed has distinctively proved; for in many instances the large union-houses which were erected are sometimes half empty.

Failing in his original purpose, he made an attempt to draw attention, through *Fraser's Magazine*, to the destitute sick of the Metropolis, and to show how, in their particular case, the treatment of their diseases could be most economically and effectively carried out, together with principles of



prevention, by one grand and comprehensive scheme.

After defining the powers of the Poor Law Board; and defending the guardians of the poor from the charge of not doing what they had no power to do, our author shadows forth that the 12,400 cases of disease of the poor in the metropolis, 6,000 of which are more or less acute cases, and 6,400 of which are old and infirm, requiring some medical attention, should be put under the most systematic hospital management, so that they may have the best medical attendance and the best possible nursing. Under the present system of workhouse management this, he contended, was impossible. He would, therefore, meet the difficulty again by the segregation principle. He would put cases of a similar kind in one large institution specially adapted for them; he would have well-paid medical officers, who understood preventive as well as curative science, to take charge of these institutions; he would have thoroughly educated nurses, or sisters, as attendants; and he would furnish the institution with baths, lavatories, water-closets, and other provisions for health of the very best kind, so as in each case to ensure the readiest means of relief or cure. In such institutions the best dietaries could be supplied at the least possible expense, and however great the first expenditure might seem, the result would be an economy in the long run.

By a further arrangement these great institutions might obtain for the sick the highest possible medical skill; they might become great schools of clinical medicine, and, by an easy transition, do away altogether with the voluntary hospital system,

which, like all purely voluntary efforts, is naturally capricious, and therefore unreliable as a permanent national necessity.

#### PUBLIC CHARITIES IN FRANCE.

I bring to a close these summaries on Poor Law administration by a notice of one of our author's earliest papers on "Public Charities in France," published in the *London Review* in the year 1829. The paper gives an excellent description of the public charities, the sisters of charity, and the medical schools as they existed in France nearly sixty years ago. The account of the Bureaux de Bienfaisance, so centralised that they all co-operate with the hospitals and other charities with mutual advantage, is exceedingly interesting. "No healthy person," he tells us, "in a state of idleness, is assisted by a Bureau de Bienfaisance; the answer to such an applicant is, Work, and you will gain your livelihood; if you fail in procuring work, we will find it for you; but if you consume your time in idleness and your wages in debauchery, you will get no assistance; if you beg, you will be imprisoned."

Great advantages were obtained, it is pointed out, by centralising the funds in the several establishments for the relief of the poor. In the medical schools he greatly commended the system of the *concours* or public examination of the medical officers for distinguished posts. Of the sisters of charity, as nurses, he gives a doleful account; and on the hospitals of France of that day he was keenly, but not too keenly, severe, in regard to their construction and sanitary arrangements.

Finally, in this early paper we see, as it were, the germ of all that preventive work against disease and poverty which for more than half a century has filled our author's thoughts, words, and acts for the reformation of the communities belonging to his time. It forms, therefore, a fitting close to this part of the present memoirs.

VOLUME II.

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PART III.

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*PREVENTION OF CRIME.*