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rather against a system which took no account of the health, efficiency and happiness of the future generation that Chadwick's anger was aroused. His remedy was scientific improvement of the law by the tightening up of the executive power through a system of Government inspectorship, a remedy which to-day has been applied in all the State-controlled departments of Public Health, Sanitation, Education, Post Office and Prisons.

CHAPTER V

THE PUBLIC HEALTH AGITATION

THE reader will understand that in this book Chadwick's work on the Poor Law Board has been separated from the account of the Public Health Movement through a desire for clarity. The two subjects are really the same. Chadwick's work on the Poor Law Commission and his administration of the Act at last gave him an opportunity to develop the ideas he already had in mind when he wrote his original articles for the *London and Westminster Reviews*. By various administrative acts he had already associated the Poor Law Board with many reforms which could hardly be considered to come within the radius of its activities. And it was while he was making inquiries in this connection that he came to appreciate the need for and

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the importance of reform in sanitation and public health.

"Ashley's next piece of work," write J. L. and Barbara Hammond in their life of Lord Shaftesbury, "brought him into close touch with a man [Chadwick] who was chiefly known for his success in making enemies, and Ashley's own fortunes in this adventure depended less on himself than on an imperious and energetic colleague."

"Imperious and energetic" admirably sum up Chadwick's connection with the Public Health Board. By the time Edwin Chadwick had reached this stage in his life he was a well-known and much abused personality. As a Poor Law Commissioner he was hated by the poor because of his insistence upon the rigid enforcement of the Act; as a Factory Commissioner he had made himself unpopular with the reform party because he accused them of being associated with agitators, and because by his report he defeated, for a time, their introduction of the Ten Hour Bill. He was aware of his own unpopularity, but he was nevertheless determined to launch his greatest idea—the Sanitary Idea.

If he had considered his plans of action

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more carefully he would perhaps have hesitated, he might have left the idea simmering a little longer in his mind, waited for a more favourable political opportunity, helped to collect around him a body of influential people sympathetic to his idea. But if he had done these things he would not have been Edwin Chadwick. To him the idea was the realization of his life's dream; to the Government Chadwick's ideas always entailed unpleasantness from some quarter. To him political friends (or enemies), favourable opportunities or hesitation meant more cholera deaths, more suffering; to the Government his energy meant devastating and unanswerable reports upon which immediate action had to be taken. The story is as old as history. Enthusiasm and firm determination are rarely coupled with acute diplomacy and foresight. And so Chadwick went ahead.

In 1838 the parochial authorities at Whitechapel were much disturbed by a serious outbreak of fever in a locality, situated near a large stagnant pond. They knew the interest Chadwick took in all matters affecting the health of the populace and they sought his advice. This was

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Chadwick's chance and he took it eagerly. He immediately put the matter before his Commissioners and persuaded them to appoint a committee of investigation. Leave was granted, and the entire arrangements were left in his hands. A strong committee of eminent doctors sympathetic to Chadwick's ideas was formed and sent to Whitechapel. The Committee was instructed—and in this it is not difficult to see the quick mind of Chadwick at work—not only to report on the existing epidemic at Whitechapel, but on the whole sanitary condition of the Metropolis.

One of the doctors selected was Doctor Southwood Smith, a man with an international reputation on the subject of fever. In 1824 Smith had been appointed physician to the London Fever Hospital, and in 1830 he published a treatise on fever which was at once accepted as a standard authority on the question. No better man could have been found for the work required. His devotion to the cause of medicine on behalf of those stricken with fever has not been adequately stressed in the history of the Public Health Movement.

The year 1838, then, marks the beginning

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of Chadwick's "great push" on behalf of better sanitary conditions. In his article on "*The Means of Assurance against the Casualties of Sickness, Decrepitude and Mortality*" in the *Westminster Review* of April, 1828, Chadwick said that "to avert or dissipate those attendant evils by the apprehension of which life is embittered and impaired" is the duty of a good Government and "that the most readily attainable means towards this end is the collection of complete information as to the circumstances under which sickness arises, together with accurate accounts of the deaths consequent upon such circumstances. . . . Accounts of this description, which perhaps at present a Government alone has the power to obtain in the requisite degree of perfection, would form an invaluable acquisition to science, and would direct the public exertions in removing those circumstances which shorten life, and in promoting those under which it is found to attain its greatest and most happy duration."

This extract, though perhaps rather an unhappy example of Chadwick's style, contains the basic principle on which he worked. He did not, of course, suggest that

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any Government could be responsible for the individual's happiness. This obviously must be largely a matter of personal effort and temperament, but he did suggest that it was desirable for a Government to do all in its power to prevent avoidable conditions which might tend to shorten the life of the individual. It was Chadwick's argument that it is possible to live and yet be unhappy, but that it is impossible to be happy without life. The individual should at least be given every opportunity to live. It is useless waiting until disease has got a hold on the individual and only then making efforts to rescue him from mortality; far better to seek out the primary causes of the infection and suppress them.

It must be made clear at this stage that it was never part of Chadwick's work to cure disease in the medical sense of the word. Rather, he exposed to the indolent and ignorant the conditions inimical to their health. He proclaimed to the world that men could live longer if they took the trouble to clear away the evils which shortened human life, and it will be difficult to find any reformer in history who more clearly proved by his career the truth of his

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own teaching, for Chadwick died in his ninety-first year.

The Whitechapel parochial authorities did Chadwick a remarkably good turn, when in despair they turned to him for advice, for the report, when it appeared, caused a sensation, and it gave Chadwick his first chance of pushing forward his Sanitary Idea.

Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century there were no definite means of accurately ascertaining the death-rate; but from the scanty figures available it has been estimated that all through the eighteenth century there were far more deaths than births. The average death-rate in London per thousand for these hundred years was roughly thirty-six. When it is remembered that the filth of generations remained unremoved it is surprising to learn that the figure was only thirty-six. Conditions, instead of getting better, were getting worse. The enormous growth of the towns was creating great difficulties, for there was a tendency to obtain the additional accommodation required, not by extending outwards, but by building over the few remaining vacant and airy spaces. Towards

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the end of the century there was a change for the better. Various bodies were set up to improve upon pavements, building, drainage and lighting. There was no system of collecting rain water into pipes which connected with a main sewer. Rain water from the roofs of houses simply poured on to the heads of pedestrians. People flung all refuse out of the window in the streets below. This was occasionally swept up into a heap and became the street's dunghill. It was then appropriated by some tradesmen who retailed it in cartloads to purchasers. Meanwhile the rotting substance gave forth moisture which ran down the streets, and as the pavements were not raised above the street level, into the houses. Since house drainage was not allowed to be connected with the storm water sewers, private cesspools were necessary. As the demand for houses increased and the regulations became less strict, builders, in order to meet the supply, built new houses on the sites of old cesspools with the result that the new houses were polluted from the moment they were erected. Moreover there was no efficient water supply.

In the provinces and in Scotland the

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conditions were much the same. The new industrialism meant the overcrowding of workers in towns. To meet this overcrowding, builders, with no one to direct or control them, built ramshackle houses totally unfit for habitation. In Edinburgh and Glasgow the overcrowding in the courts and alleys was particularly bad. Mounds of filth would be heaped up in the centre of the court and would be left there stenching for weeks on end.

Then came the cholera. In 1831 it ravaged England. To attempt to give the numbers of deaths from the disease is useless for there are no accurate statistics available, but at any rate the casualties were estimated at over ten thousand. No effort was made to stem the disease. People prayed in the churches, but no action was taken. Statesmen fought over the Reform Bill whilst the filth collected in the streets. Nothing had been done when in 1838 Chadwick issued his report.

Chadwick made up in energy for any lack of tact in dealing with the Poor Law Board Commissioners for he had more than seven thousand copies of the report distributed—a great number for those days. It was the

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beginning of his great scheme, and he saw that its distribution amongst the people would have an important effect. As he anticipated, the effect was instantaneous. The report came before Parliament and greatly disturbed statesmen, politicians and influential public men. The graphic description of the chaotic water supply system as described by Doctor Southwood Smith in his independent report, and the terrible conditions dispassionately set out by the other two eminent doctors in their report roused the public mind. Here, it was thought, was something that might help towards ending this scourge of disease.

In the House of Lords the Bishop of London (Bishop Blomfield) threw his influence into the scale on Chadwick's side. The inquiry had taken place in his diocese and he had been appalled by the findings. He resolved to help Chadwick's grand design for a clean England in every possible way. He immediately urged that the Poor Law Commission be instructed to carry out an inquiry into the sanitary condition of the whole of the labouring population of Great Britain on the lines of the Whitechapel report. Lord John Russell as Home

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Secretary gave the necessary instructions to the Poor Law Commissioners, and by the end of August, 1839, Chadwick had begun to work the machines of inquiry, investigation and research which were to lead to the epoch-making report which appeared in 1842.

In the meantime two important events had taken place. At a public meeting at the Exeter Hall, London, in December, 1839, an Association had been formed known as "The Health of Towns Association." It was a purely propagandist organization formed with the object of stimulating interest in public health and hygiene. Amongst its members were the Marquis of Normanby, Doctor Southwood Smith, Lord Ashley, Lord Morpeth and Doctor J. R. Lynch. Doctor Lynch, whilst fighting the typhus and trying to break down the insanitary conditions in the slums of London, caught the dreaded disease himself and died of it, leaving a widow and children unprovided for. At a public meeting held to start a subscription on behalf of his wife and children, Chadwick made a forceful and sympathetic speech, showing how Doctor Lynch had earned the gratitude of all

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interested in public health by his devotion to the cause of sanitation. Men from all political parties sympathetic to the new idea of public cleanliness were drawn to 'The Health of Towns Association, and its work in educating public opinion was valuable.

In June, 1840, R. A. Slaney, M.P., another prominent member of the Association, secured the appointment of a House of Commons Select Committee on the subject of the nation's health, which anticipated in many ways Chadwick's own report. Doctor Southwood Smith, who was only second to Chadwick in his persistent efforts to arouse public opinion, gave evidence before this Committee. Mrs. Lewes, in her *Life of Doctor Southwood Smith*, quotes him as saying: "All this suffering might be averted. These poor people are victims that are sacrificed. The effect is the same as if twenty or thirty thousand of them were annually taken out of their homes and put to death; the only difference being that they are left in them to die." Strong language! But the death of Doctor Lynch was probably in his mind, and this evidence given by a man who devoted his life to relieving human ills may be taken as an example of the

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passion for reform these men put into their work.

These two events, coupled with Southwood Smith's personally conducted tours of the London slums, which unlike the usual "conducted tours" created a great impression of horror and disgust in the minds of his visitors, kept the question alive. Lord Normanby introduced into the House of Lords several small bills for alleviating the distress, but in 1841 Lord Melbourne was defeated, and Peel became Prime Minister. In 1842, under pressure from Ashley, Peel, after refusing to introduce legislation, appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts. This Commission, known as the Duke of Buccleuch's Commission (the Duke was Chairman), issued its first report in 1844. So for the first six months of the year 1842 two commissions on public health were taking evidence and drawing up reports. And Chadwick conducted both of them: for needless to say the Duke of Buccleuch, realizing that Chadwick was a master in the art of collecting information, handed over to him the entire organization of his commission.

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The Poor Law Commission Report was presented to Sir James Graham, Home Secretary in Sir Robert Peel's Government, on the 9th July, 1842. This report, nominally the Report of the Commissioners, was really entirely drawn up by Chadwick and is one of the most important documents in the history of the first half of the nineteenth century. For besides initiating a devastating attack on the private interests responsible for the deplorable sanitary condition of England, it draws a vivid picture of the life led by the labouring population. The veil of secrecy and pretence is drawn aside and real conditions are shown.

In a short book it is impossible for the author to devote as much space as he would wish to extracts from this report (it contains four hundred and fifty-seven pages) and to the ideals which prompted Chadwick to pursue his object. Four extracts alone must suffice. The first gives an example of the difficulties with which he had to contend. The local authorities still wallowed in the customs, methods and traditions of the Middle Ages; and in spite of the advances in science, machinery and government they were still content to leave

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things alone and to go on as they had always gone on in the same old stupid way.

“The Parish officers frequently oppose improved modes of paving and efficient cleansing (as they generally opposed the new police on the ground that it diminished the means of subsistence of decrepit old men as watchmen) for the avowed reason that it is expedient to keep the streets in their present state of filth in order to keep up the means of employing indigent persons as street sweepers and sweepers of crossings in removing it.”¹

Again, with regard to the cleaning of the streets in a city like Manchester, the report says :

“The expense of cleansing the streets of the township of Manchester is five thousand pounds per annum. For this sum the first class streets are cleansed once a week, the second class once a fortnight and the third class once a month. But this leaves untouched the courts, alleys and places

¹ Report of the Poor Law Commissioners on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population, 1842.

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where the poorest live and where the cleansing should be daily."¹

Later he compares the homes of the labouring population with the conditions existing in the prisons :

"The examination of loathsome prisons has gained one individual a national and European celebrity. Yet we have seen that there are whole streets of houses composing some of the wynds of Glasgow and Edinburgh and great numbers of the courts in London and the older towns in England, in which the condition of every inhabited room and the physical condition of the inmates is even more horrible than the worst of the dungeons that Howard ever visited."²

Finally he sums up by recapitulating the chief conclusions which the evidence seemed to him to establish :

"The various forms of epidemic, endemic, and other disease, caused or aggravated, or propagated chiefly amongst the labouring

¹ Report of the Poor Law Commissioners on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population, 1842.

² *Ibid.*

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classes by atmospheric impurities produced by decomposing animal and vegetable substances, by damp and filth and close and overcrowding dwellings, prevail . . . in every part of the Kingdom. . . . That such disease, wherever its attacks are frequent, is always found in connection with the physical circumstances above specified, and that where those circumstances are removed by drainage, proper cleansing, better ventilation, and other means of diminishing atmospheric impurity, the frequency and intensity of such disease are abated. . . . That the formation of all habits of cleanliness is obstructed by defective supplies of water. That the annual loss of life from filth and bad sanitation is greater than the loss from death or wounds in any wars in which the country has been engaged in modern times."¹

It may be of interest to quote here an extract from Charles Kingsley's novel *Two Years Ago*: for Kingsley's hero Thomas Thurnall is an exact prototype of Edwin Chadwick. In answering the question from a local clergyman as to why he (Thurnall)

¹ Report of the Poor Law Commissioners on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population, 1842.

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incurs odium in a cause that is all but hopeless he gives the magnificent reply :

“ Well, I do it because I like it. It's a sort of sporting with your true doctor. He blazes away at a disease where he sees one, as he would at a bear or a lion; the very sight of it excites his organ of destructiveness. Don't you understand me? You hate sin, you know. Well, I hate disease. Moral evil is your devil, and physical evil is mine. I hate it, little or big; I hate to see a fellow sick; I hate to see a child rickety and pale; I hate to see a speck of dirt in the street; I hate to see a woman's gown torn; I hate to see her stockings down at heel; I hate to see anything wasted, anything awry, anything going wrong; I hate to see water-power wasted, manure wasted, land wasted, muscle wasted, pluck wasted, brains wasted; I hate neglect, incapacity, idleness, ignorance and all the disease and misery which spring out of that. There's my devil; and I can't help, for the life of me, going right at his throat, wheresoever I meet him.”

That in one long paragraph is a photograph of Sir Edwin Chadwick's soul. No

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additions or alterations could make a better picture of the burning passion within the man.

The Duke of Buccleuch's Commission issued its first report in 1844. The conclusions arrived at were similar to those of the Poor Law Commissioners, except that the investigations had been conducted on a larger scale and were in consequence of more importance. And yet nothing was done. The political controversy over Free Trade was raging. The 'Anti-Corn Law League was carrying on extensive propaganda campaigns. The country was flooded with lecturers and speakers. Large sums of money were collected and spent in extending the campaign to the rural districts. Manufacturers vied with landowners for the sympathetic ear of public opinion. The struggle was fierce and prolonged. Eventually in May, 1846, Peel, himself a convert, carried the Repeal with the help of his political opponents. In June he was defeated by another combination, and Lord John Russell became Prime Minister.

Lord Morpeth, afterwards seventh Earl of Carlisle, an able, cultivated man, was

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appointed Commissioner of Woods and Forests in Russell's Government, and in 1847 he introduced a bill to give effect to the recommendations of Chadwick's two Commissions, but mainly owing to bad draughtsmanship it was defeated. In February, 1848, Lord Morpeth reintroduced his Bill, which passed into law as the first Public Health Act.

Before this Act nobody—that is to say no Government Department—was responsible for the cleansing or lighting of streets, the supply of water, the paving and making of roads or houses, or the sanitary arrangements of the towns. All these essential services were left in the hands of private enterprise, which profited at the expense of the public. Each corporation had different charters which had been granted them by private bills from the House of Commons. The result was chaotic. There was no attempt at centralization or uniformity. The feverish rush for production had been allowed to develop unchecked, and the labouring classes, with no voice in the government of the country in which they lived, were forced to inhabit slums from which builders, landowners and landlords

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drew handsome profits. The Municipal Reform Act of 1835 had not been sufficiently far-reaching in its scope to be allowed to deal with these essential services of public health.

It is not difficult, nearly seventy years after the event, to point out the mistakes Chadwick made in his recommendations for improving these conditions. It is easy to see now, in the light of later legislation, where his plan failed, but making allowances for these faults it must be admitted that he was the initiator of a series of reforms in the relationship between central and local government. These reforms compelled the local authorities to adopt and maintain a certain standard of efficiency demanded by the State.

The Act recommends that the Crown supervise, administer, and inspect the sanitary law for large towns and populous districts; that the powers of the local authorities be extended so as to cover a larger area, and that they be granted wider administrative powers; that drainage, cleansing of streets, paving, lighting and water supply be all brought under one authority in each district; that a General Board of

Health be established composed of three members (later a medical doctor was added); that this General Board have power, on petition from a certain number of the rate-payers, to appoint local boards to control water-supply, drainage, and burial grounds; that a proper system of ventilation be adopted in all public buildings and schools; and finally that local authorities have the power to appoint Medical Officers to report upon the sanitary condition of towns or districts.

The Board appointed under the Act consisted of Lord Morpeth, representing the Government, Lord Ashley, and Chadwick. Doctor Southwood Smith was added later. The six years of the Board's life, considered as a whole, were a failure. It carried out many praiseworthy reforms. It had bad luck. It had many formidable opponents, but it was wrongly conceived from the beginning, and from this bad start it never recovered.

The Board was not responsible to Parliament. The Government representative was on the Board as a Commissioner not as an executive officer with control. So although the Board was paid for out of the State's funds and the country was taxed to provide

the salaries of its members, it could administer, advise, and control without the consent of the representatives of the people, and without having anybody to defend its actions in the House of Commons. Under the Act the Board was established for five years, which meant in effect that no amendments, alterations or criticisms could be made by Parliament until the Act again came before Parliament for renewal.

It was both bureaucratic and yet not bureaucratic enough. At the request of a certain number of ratepayers it could appoint a Local Board. Having done so, however, it could not control it but could only offer advice. This was an obvious defect. It was irritating to the inhabitants of the town who did not want a Local Board to have one forced on them; it was also irritating to the enthusiasts to have a Board appointed and then to find that the Central Board had no control over the local authorities, who could if they wished—and they often did—turn a deaf ear to the advice and suggestions from Whitehall.

The Central Board made no attempt to educate the local authorities. It would have been better to encourage the Municipalities

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to adopt public health schemes. No effort was made to induce the people to swallow the pill and accept the new proposals. "Grants in aid" would have been an incentive, but instead of that the Commissioners tried to bully the people, and adopted an attitude of superiority utterly unsuitable to the intricate relation between central and local government.

In spite of these disadvantages the Board in its General Report (1848-54) was able to indicate much useful work which it had accomplished. Two hundred and forty-eight districts had applied to come under the Act. Over twelve hundred meetings had been held, and over a hundred thousand letters had been answered by the active and enthusiastic Commissioners. Maps of districts and works were well in hand. The Board proudly stated that public opinion was welcoming their activities; that they had forced the people to pay attention to their environment, and that the expenses in connection with the Board had been justified.

On the other hand there was active and virulent opposition. In the first place there were the anti-centralists. In Joshua

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Toulmin Smith this opposition found an ardent and vigorous leader. Smith was a publicist and lawyer with an almost distressing literary activity. As a young man he went to Boston, but returned to England and settled at Highgate in 1842. He at once took an interest in the local affairs of the neighbourhood, and in 1847 did excellent work in calling public attention to the lack of caution and care taken against the dreaded approach of cholera. At this point in his career he came into violent conflict with Chadwick, and adopted as his life's task the dull work of trying to prove by lengthy, ponderous books and pamphlets that the vestry was the main cog in the wheel of local government. He delved into ancient law to assert that the historic principles of local government were all based on the parish, and that centralization was a wrong and pernicious idea. All authority should proceed from the parish council outwards and not from the central government downwards. This was in opposition to Chadwick's principle of creating highly specialized departments for dealing with the new conditions, but nevertheless the two did agree that something immediate must be

done to rouse the people from their lethargy. By a curious twist of circumstances the party most antagonistic to Chadwick in his scheme for centralization was led by a man who was active on behalf of efficient local self-government, but who opposed the only possible method of improvement on the ground that centralization was historically illegal. Chadwick's opponents, whilst not in the least interested in Toulmin Smith's historical proofs, were pleased to find an able leader.

In the second place there was a host of monopolists opposed to the Board. Landlords, undertakers, contractors and corporations all raised strong objections. Their interests were at stake. These people, who were making their living out of the filth and dirt of the towns, were naturally furious at having their monopolies taken away from them by a Board which they considered to be lacking in experience in such matters as sanitation, drainage and sanitary engineering. In this respect the members of the Board undoubtedly erred. They were doctrinaire and aggressive. They were not altogether well-informed in matters of sanitary science and building. Their

methods were often clumsy and scientifically wrong. This was characteristic of them. They trusted no one, believed in no one, and thought that every man's hand was against them. They were apt to seek no advice but their own and they were often in the wrong.

In Edwin Hodder's biography of Lord Shaftesbury details of the attacks on the Board are recorded from his diary. On 31st December, 1852, Shaftesbury writes :

“Will our enemies succeed in destroying the only institution that stands for the physical and social improvement of the people? Our foes are numerous, and I dread their success; it would vex me beyond expression to see Chadwick and Southwood Smith sent to the right-about, and the Board, which, under God, has done and conceived so many good things, broken up.”

Again, on 9th August, 1853, he records the various people who oppose the Board and their reasons for doing so :

“The Parliamentary agents are our sworn enemies, because we have reduced

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expenses, and, consequently, their fees, within reasonable limits. The civil engineers also, because we have selected able men, who have carried into effect new principles, and at a less salary. The College of Physicians, and all its dependencies, because of our independent action and singular success in dealing with the cholera, when we maintained and proved that many a Poor Law medical officer knew more than all the flash and fashionable doctors of London. All the Boards of Guardians: for we exposed their selfishness, their cruelty, their reluctance to meet and relieve the suffering poor, in the days of the epidemic. The Treasury besides (for the subalterns there hated Chadwick; it was an ancient grudge, and paid when occasion served). Then come the water companies, whom we laid bare, and devised a method of supply, which altogether superseded them. The Commissioners of Sewers, for our plans and principles were the reverse of theirs; they hated us with a perfect hatred."

Under the original Act the Board had been set up for five years. In 1853, owing to a further visit of cholera, Parliament was

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induced to prolong its life by one year, but in 1854 the end came. The agitation was successful, and the movement for better public hygiene came to an abrupt end. The tragedy of the ending is revealed in the speeches made in the House of Commons against the renewal of the Act, for it was the blood of Chadwick that was wanted. Most speakers wanted to prolong the Board in some way or another, but none would have a good word to say for the man who had devoted the greater part of his public life to bringing the atrocious sanitary conditions of the country before their eyes. They saw in him a man fighting against private property and private interests; they saw in him a man whose energy they distrusted and disliked; they saw in him a man who was a danger to their comfort and prosperity. This point of view was well expressed by *The Times* which wrote: "Æsculapius and Chiron, in the form of Mr. Chadwick and Dr. Southwood Smith, have been deposed, and we prefer to take our chance of cholera and the rest, than to be bullied into health." The following passage from the same paper is also worth quoting as it shows the prejudice and hatred

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Toulmin Smith and his followers had stirred up against the local Boards: "It was a perpetual Saturday night, and Master John Bull was scrubbed and rubbed and small-tooth-combed till the tears ran into his eyes, and his teeth chattered, and his fists clenched themselves with worry and pain."

On 31st July, 1854, Lord Seymour opposed the Government's proposal to renew the Act. Lord Palmerston gave a spirited defence as well as making several important concessions. Lord Shaftesbury made an eloquent appeal on behalf of the Board, pointing out many of the great services it had rendered to the country. But it was no good. The House was determined that the Chadwick régime should cease and the Government was defeated. On the same day Lord Shaftesbury wrote in his diary:

"No choice of resigning or remaining; the House of Commons threw out the Bill this day. . . . Thus, after five years of intense and unrewarded labour, I am turned off like a piece of lumber! Such is the public service. Some years hence if we are remembered, justice may be done to us; but not in our lifetimes. I have never

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known a wrong by the public redressed so that the sufferer could enjoy the reparation, for

"Nations slowly wise and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust."

Parliament then made arrangements for a new Board of Health with powers vested in the Privy Council and the Home Office. Sir John Simon, formerly Medical Officer for the City of London, was appointed Medical Officer to this new Board. There was also a paid President. In 1871 the Local Government Board took over these duties, and in 1875 a Public Health Act was passed establishing a system of administration under the Local Government Board. But still no central authority was set up. This administration, though an improvement on previous attempts, was nothing like adequate enough. The work was too extensive, too complicated and too specialized to be added to the shoulders of an already overburdened Department. What was wanted was a Ministry of Health, with a specialized staff working under a secretariat with a Minister and an Under Secretary responsible to Parliament.

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By his agitation Chadwick sowed the seed for this reform, which eventually came into operation in 1918 with Christopher Addison as first Minister of Health. It was the truth that Lord Shaftesbury wrote when he said, "justice may be done to us; but not in our lifetimes," but who will now question that the great fight which Chadwick waged between the years 1838-48 for the better sanitation of the country was not a victory of solid achievement in the history of nineteenth century reform? Ignoring for the moment the defects in Chadwick's character which so often made him a target for abuse, forgetting the faulty constitution of the first Public Health Board and the just accusation that its mode of procedure was peremptory and dictatorial, omitting the fierce antagonism to the idea of centralization—putting aside all these contingent facts, it is impossible not to agree wholeheartedly with Sir John Simon that the drastic changes which were put into operation during this decade were "directly due to the zealous labours of one eminent public servant, Sir Edwin Chadwick."¹

Retirement with a pension of a thousand

¹ *English Sanitary Institutions.*

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pounds a year at the age of fifty-four was Chadwick's reward. He had fought hard if too vigorously; he had been a zealous administrator if bureaucratic in his outlook; he had met abuse with hard work, agitation with counter agitation, personal hatred with no show of resentment. To all outward appearances he was beaten and his Sanitary Idea had failed: but he must have known within himself that his name would be written in bold type across the pages of the history of sanitation.