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will suffice to summarise the chief fact which the narrative is concerned to carry on. Whatever sanitary gains may have accrued from the destruction and rebuilding of the City, London, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was but an ill-conditioned place of residence. Provided hitherto with hardly the rudiments of such sewerage and water-supply as are needful for the health of cities,—with no systematic organisation for removal of refuse,—with pavement grossly insufficient,—with such neglect of scavenging, and such accumulations of uncleanliness, as made fun for native satirists, while they scandalised foreign visitors,—London under Queen Anne, the London of Gay's *Trivia* and Swift's *City Shower*, was not entitled to expect immunity from the diseases which associate themselves with filth. And such as we leave it in those last Stuart days, we shall find it again, without any essential sanitary change, after more than a century of Hanoverian rule.

Part Third.—NEW MOMENTA.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISE AND EARLY PROGRESS OF BRITISH PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.

DOWN to the end of our Stuart times, what little had been done for the Sanitary Interests of the Community had rested on scarcely any better medical knowledge than was common to doctor and laity. Such arts of healing as had prevailed during the Middle Ages had been exercised from the widely-different standpoints of the ecclesiastic, the barber, and the grocer.* The truth which we by degrees have learnt, that Medicine in its main significance is but an applied Physiology, could not in those earlier times be imagined; and it was only by slow succeeding steps, extending over centuries, that Medical Science, in our meaning of the term, could come into self-conscious existence. But, during the Tudor and Stuart reigns, changes, which we from our after-times can recognise to have been the beginnings of Modern Medicine, had been tending to define themselves as in embryo. The so-called revival of learning in Europe, with the various literary and artistic enthusiasms which at first seemed to be its only fruit, had been followed by a strange eventful quickening of man's deeper interrogative faculties; and this new intellectual spirit, destined to be of far-reaching revolutionary effect in affairs of Church and State, had sounded also a first reveil to the sincere scientific study of Nature. From the fifteenth century onwards, as that most ennobling of studies grew, fresh and fresher lights gathered rapidly to a dawn of the happiest day of human knowledge. In the sixteenth century, in countries other than our own, Copernik, soon to be followed by Galileo, had started the

* See above in chapter v. In the present nearly last decennium of the nineteenth century, certain antient rights of conquest of these three orders of practitioners are, alas, still held to justify the sixty-odd varieties of title under which men may be found practising medicine within the United Kingdom.

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new science of the stars; the alchemists had begun their innovative experiments on the dead matters of the crust of the earth; Vesalius had achieved his daring dissections of the human body; and schools of study were on all sides arising, wherein Ptolemy and Galen were no longer to be masters without appeal. It was however more especially in the seventeenth century, that the Art of Medicine began to quicken with new ambitions to know, and with new conceptions of how to learn. In the earlier half of the century, signalised by the publication of the *Novum Organon*, and by the discovery of the Circulation of the Blood,* noble eloquence and nobler example had taught lessons, which never again could be lost from men's minds, as to the spirit and method of all scientific research—that system of modest and patient *Interrogation* through which alone any knowledge of Nature will grow. Anatomy, fairly entitled to be so called, soon became able to shew triumphant progress; and during the last third of the century, our great physician, Thomas Sydenham, applying the same spirit of exact observation to the symptoms and treatment of disease, gave to Practical Medicine the new birth from which, for the two past centuries, it has had its continuous development. "Continuous," indeed: for, as we look back to that age from our own, we see, working ever diligently onward as the genius of progress through the two hundred years, the one always rewarded and always increasing spirit of exactitude. There have been the bedside observations of successive great practitioners—from those who like Mead and Fothergill and Huxham, were Sydenham's next English successors, to now when we look back on the memory of Laennec and Louis and Trousseau, of Traube and Skoda and Wunderlich and Graefe, of Addison and Bright and Robert Williams, of Brodie and Latham and Prout: assisted, all of them, more and more greatly, by those studies of the dead diseased body which the great Morgagni began,—studies first by ones and twos of epoch-making men, such as (in their respective countries) Baillie, Cruveilhier, Rokitansky, Virchow; and then by men associated in hundreds as in our London Pathological Society. Anyone who compares the nomenclature of a modern

* Lord Bacon's *Novum Organon* was published in 1620; and William Harvey's *Exercitatio de Motu Sanguinis* in 1628.

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hospital-report with the old Bills of Mortality, will see how more and more exactly the physician has become able to identify each unit of disease which he has to treat: while, side by side with that infinitely developed power of diagnosis, the power of physiologically interpreting each morbidity or aggregate of morbidities, and of applying to each its antidote, has been coming into existence, as the Medicine of the Future, under guidance of the great physiological experimentalists, from John Hunter onward.

The Fathers of Modern Preventive Medicine.

Even from the dawn of these better times, even from the close of the seventeenth century, members of the Medical Profession began to be of more account than before with regard to the preventability of disease. It began to be definitely expected of them that, as treaters of disease, they, better than the laity, should know in exact terms the conditions under which disease arises and is spread, and by what (if any) means it can be prevented. During the 18th century, and so much of the 19th as preceded the accession of Queen Victoria, British practitioners took the lead of the world in their endeavours to fulfil that expectation. They did so with such success that we, their followers in the Profession, cannot too gratefully record our own obligations to them, nor can too gladly feel that Modern Preventive Medicine has in great part sprung from what our compatriots then began to do and to teach.

Earliest on the roll of the Fathers of our Modern Preventive Medicine are the names of RICHARD MEAD, and JOHN PRINGLE, and JAMES LIND: to be followed at no long interval by those of GEORGE BAKER, GILBERT BLANE, EDWARD JENNER, and TURNER THACKRAH.

MEAD.

In 1720, Dr. RICHARD MEAD, who for eleven earlier years in the century had been Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, and who now was by far the foremost of English physicians, published his so-entitled *Short Discourse concerning Pestilential Contagion, and the Methods to be used to prevent it.* Within a year the work had passed unchanged through seven editions; and it afterwards, still in Mead's life-time, went (with additions) through two more. The deservedly high authority of Mead's

name would alone have ensured circulation and influence to anything which he might have seen fit to write; and in 1720 the dissemination of what he had to say was greatly promoted by the circumstance that his then subject-matter was one of urgent public anxiety. Levantine Plague, unforgotten from its last and most terrible visitation of fifty years before, was now once more threatening the country: the contagion had again recently been introduced into Marseilles, and was spreading furiously in the South of France: and Dr. Mead's *Discourse* answered an appeal, which the Secretary of State had made to him, that he would advise what precautions could be taken here for the public safety.

The precautions which Mead named first—(for he believed plague to be an eminently contagious disease)—were: that there must be strict quarantine against the infected foreign countries; and that, if the infection "through a miscarriage in the public care" should penetrate those outward defences, and shew itself present in any part of England, the part thus infected must be debarred by quarantine-restrictions from communicating freely with the rest of the country. Thus far his advice was in substance only such as had on previous occasions of danger been given by others, and been more or less followed by the authorities; but, in contemplating the possibility of a re-infection of England, he proceeded to give advice more distinctively his own with regard to the management of the infected places themselves; and from this advice of his there dates in England so greatly an improved understanding (as compared with fifty years before) of the spirit in which dangers of pestilence ought to be dealt with, that it may be well to give here in abstract, and generally in Mead's own words, the principal of the passages in question. He begins by shewing how equally cruel and futile had been the rule, enforced on former occasions, that every house which had any sick in it must be made a prison-house for all its inmates, sick and healthy together, and "this to continue at least a month after all the family was dead or recovered." . . . "Nothing could justify such cruelty but the plea that it is for the good of the whole community, and prevents the spreading of infection." This however it does not. Such "shutting up of houses is only keeping so many seminaries of contagion, sooner or later to be dispersed abroad: for the waiting a month or longer from the death of the last patient will avail no more than keeping a bale of infected goods unpacked: the poison will fly out whenever the Pandora's box is opened." And in another point of view, how mischievous must the system be. "There is no evil in which the great rule of resisting the beginning more properly takes place than in the present case. . . . As the plague always breaks out in some particular place, it is certain, that the directions of the civil magistrate ought to be such, as to make it as much for the interest of infected families to discover their misfortune, as it is, when a house is on fire, to call the assistance of the neighbourhood: whereas, on the contrary, the methods taken by the public, on such occasions have always had the appearance of a severe discipline, and even punishment, rather than of a compassionate care; which must naturally make the infected conceal the disease as long as was possible . . . . Other measures are certainly to be taken;" and these he proceeds to suggest, as follows.—In the first place, for Central Authority, there ought to be established a Council of Health, entrusted with all requisite powers: "some of the principal officers of state, both ecclesiastical and civil, some of the chief magistrates of the city, two or three physicians, &c." They should "see all their orders executed with impartial justice, and that no unnecessary hardships under any pretence whatever be put upon any by the officers they employ." For local purposes,—"instead of ignorant old women," . . . "understanding and diligent men" should be the "searchers." They, wherever the distemper breaks out, should without delay "order all the families, in which the sickness is, to be removed: the sick to different places from the sound; but the houses for both should be three or four miles out of town: and the sound people should be stript of all their cloaths, and washed and shaved, before they go into their new lodgings. These removals ought to be made in the night, when the streets are clear of people: which will prevent all danger of spreading the infection. And besides, all profitable care should be taken to provide such means of conveyance for the sick, that they may receive no injury. As this management is necessary with respect to the poor and meaner part of the people: so the rich, who have conveniences, may, instead of being carried to

lazarettoes, be obliged to go to their country-houses; provided that care be always taken to keep the sound separated from the infected. And at the same time, all the inhabitants who are yet well should be permitted, nay, encouraged, to leave the town, which, the thinner it is, will be the more healthy. No manner of compassion and care should be wanted to the diseased; to whom, when lodged in clean and airy habitations, there would, with due cautions, be no great danger in giving attendance. All expenses should be paid by the public, and no charges ought to be thought great, which are counterbalanced by the saving a nation from the greatest of calamities. Nor does it seem at all unreasonable, that a reward should be given to the person that makes the first discovery of infection in any place; since it is undeniable, that the making known the evil to those who are provided with proper methods against it, is the first and main step towards the overcoming it." As the above advice is "founded upon this principle, that the best method for stopping infection, is to separate the healthy from the diseased; so, in small towns and villages where it is practicable, if the sound remove themselves into barracks, or the like airy habitations, it may probably be even more useful, than to remove the sick. This method has been found beneficial in France after all others have failed. But the success of this proves the method of removing the sick, where the other cannot be practised, to be the most proper of any. When the sick families are gone, all the goods of the houses in which they were, should be buried deep underground or burnt." In his earlier editions he prefers burning, but not in the later: "because, especially in a close place, some infectious particles may possibly be dispersed by the smoke through the neighbourhood." "The houses themselves may be demolished or pulled down, if that can conveniently be done; that is, if they are remote enough from others: otherwise it may suffice to have them thoroughly cleansed, and then plastered up. And, after this, all possible care ought still to be taken to remove whatever causes are found to breed and promote contagion. In order to this, the overseers of the poor (who might be assisted herein by other officers) should visit the dwellings of all the meaner sort of the inhabitants; and where they find them stifled up too close and nasty, should lessen their number by sending

some into better lodgings, and should take care, by all manner of provision and encouragement, to make them more cleanly and sweet. No good work carries its own reward with it so much as this kind of charity: and therefore, be the expense what it will, it must never be thought unreasonable. For nothing approaches so near to the first original of the plague, as air pent up, loaded with damps, and corrupted with the filthiness that proceeds from animal bodies. Our common prisons afford us an instance of something like this, where very few escape what they call the gaol fever, which is always attended with a degree of malignity in proportion to the closeness and stench of the place: and it would certainly very well become the wisdom of the government, as well with regard to the health of the town, as in compassion to the prisoners, to take care, that all houses of confinement should be kept as airy and clean, as is consistent with the use for which they are designed." "At the same time that care is taken of houses, the proper officers should be strictly charged to see that the streets be washed and kept clean from filth, carrion, and all manner of nuisances; which should be carried away in the night time: nor should the laystalls be suffered to be too near the city. Beggars and idle persons should be taken up, and such miserable objects as are neither fit for the common hospitals or workhouses, should be provided for in an hospital for incurables." "As for houses, the first care ought to be to keep them clean: for as nastiness is a great source of infection, so cleanliness is the greatest preservative; which shows us the true reason, why the poor are most obnoxious to contagious diseases." From certain fumigations which have been recommended as means of disinfecting houses, he would not expect advantage: "but the smoke of sulphur perhaps, as it abounds with an acid spirit which is found by experience to be very penetrating, and to have a great power to repress fermentations, may promise some service this way." . . . "The next thing after the purifying of houses, is to consider by what means particular persons may best defend themselves against contagion: for the certain doing of which, it would be necessary to put the humours of the body into such a state, as not to be alterable by the matter of infection: . . . . . but, since none of these methods promise any certain protection: as leaving the place infected is the surest preservative, so the next

to it is to avoid, as much as may be, the near approach to the sick, or to such as have but lately recovered. For the greater security herein it will be advisable to avoid all crowds of people. Nay, it should be the care of the magistrates to prohibit all unnecessary assemblies; and likewise to oblige all who get over the disease to confine themselves for some time, before they appear abroad. The advice to keep at a distance from the sick, is also to be understood of the dead bodies; which should be buried at as great a distance from dwelling-houses, as may be; put deep in the earth; and covered with the exactest care; . . . . they should likewise be carried out in the night, while they are yet fresh and free from putrefaction." In his eighth edition, Mead prints an official letter showing that, before the first publication of the *Discourse*, a system of separation and isolation such as he proposed had been used with advantage in the King's Hanoverian possessions.

It may be mentioned in passing that, as soon as possible after the publication of Mead's *Discourse*, an Act of Parliament (7th Geo. I., cap. 3) was passed to give effect to his recommendations; but that a year later those provisions of the Act which gave "power to remove to a lazaret or pest-house any person whatsoever infected with the plague, or healthy persons out of an infected family from their habitations though distant from any other dwelling," and "power for drawing lines or trenches" around infected districts, with a view to the keeping of strict quarantine over their communications, were repealed by 8th Geo. I., cap. 8. Mead, referring to this repeal in the eighth edition of his *Discourse*, speaks of it as having been occasioned by faction, which aimed only at spiting the Ministry of the day, and he quotes "a learned prelate now dead" (*query* Atterbury) as having confessed so much to him: but though no doubt there may have been even in those days a certain pleasure in the vermicularities of faction, it must be admitted that the repealed provisions were such as could not easily have been enforced.* Mead, in recommending Quarantine, was in agreement with his

* See in Hansard's *Parliamentary History* of 1721, Nov. 17 to Dec. 13, the various proceedings which led to the ministerial abandonment of Mead's clauses. See also, the discussion of Quarantine in the Eighth Annual Report of the Medical Officer of the Privy Council.

medical contemporaries and predecessors in all parts of the world; and if his and their successors in the present generation would in the same circumstances not recommend it, probably this would depend not so much on any difference of medical principle as on the truer measure now taken of what in any such case would be administratively possible.

PRINGLE.

Dr. (afterwards baronet) JOHN PRINGLE'S work on the *Diseases of the Army* was founded on his official medical experiences, chiefly as physician-general to the British forces, and physician to the military hospitals, during the campaigns of 1742–3, in and about Flanders, and in Great Britain. In the first of the three parts into which his book is divided, he describes as matter of fact, and in order of time, the various attacks of illness which the troops suffered, and the conditions of place and season under which each illness prevailed: in the second part, grouping those facts, he shows in a broad way the connexion of particular sorts of cause with particular sorts of disease, and proceeds to point out, in regard of the causes, "the means of removing some and rendering others less dangerous": in the third part, he speaks more fully of the individual diseases, and discusses in detail the causes and prevention (as well as the symptoms and treatment) of each of those which had been of most consequence. Pringle's work is one of the classics of Medicine.* With his plain peremptory insistence on common health-necessaries for the soldier,—with his frequent inculpation of "putrid air" as the condition under which dysentery and the "autumnal" fevers (probably both paludal and entero-zymotic) prevailed in the camps, and "jail-fever" in the hospitals,—with his excellent directions against damp and filth in camps, and for the "right management of the air" in hospitals,—he began hygienic reform for the British Army, and gave at the

* Pringle's work was first published in 1752, and was in a fourth edition in 1764. Two years before the first edition of the entire work, the substance of one of its sections had been separately published in the form of a *Letter to Dr. Mead on the Nature and Cure of Hospital and Jayl Fevers*. The occasion of the *Letter* was that, in the spring sessions of 1750 at the Old Bailey, there had been a disastrous infection of the Court by jail-fever, killing judges, counsel and others, "to the amount of above forty, without making allowance for those of a lower rank whose death may not have been heard of." See Pringle as above.

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LIND.

same time most valuable hints to the civil population how likewise their typhus and their enteric infections might be prevented.

Services, strictly analogous to the above, and not less memorable than they, were rendered to the British Navy, and to the universal interests of Preventive Medicine, by the works which Dr. JAMES LIND, for many years Physician to Haslar Hospital, wrote *On the means of preserving the Health of Seamen:* viz. by his general *Essay* having that title, and by the special papers in which he more elaborately wrote of *Scurvy* and of *Infection*.* His declared object was to provide "a plan of directions for preserving the British seamen from such distempers as prove much more fatal to their corps than all the other calamities incident to them at sea": for (said he) "the number of seamen in time of war, who die by shipwreck, capture, famine, fire, or sword, are but inconsiderable in respect of such as are destroyed by the ship-diseases, and by the usual maladies of intemperate climates."† His teaching for the purpose which he had in view was at once accepted by his Profession as of the highest authority; and, over and above the good which it effected in making the routine of ship-life wholesomer in common sanitary respects than it had been, signal success attended it in two particular directions which may be named: *i.e.*, in regard of scurvy, and in regard of typhus. The fact that scurvy, which used to cripple fleet after fleet, and to waste thousands on thousands of the bravest of lives, has, since the days of Anson's expedition,

* Lind's *Treatise on Scurvy* was first published in 1753, and reached its third edition in 1772. His *Essay on the most effectual means of preserving the Health of Seamen in the Royal Navy* was first published in 1757, had a second edition in 1762, and a third in 1774. In 1761 he published *Two Papers on Fevers and Infection*, in 1763 a *Postscript* to them, and in 1773 a separate paper, *The Jail Distemper, and the proper methods of preventing and stopping its infection.* In 1774, a new edition of all the last-named papers was combined in one volume with the third edition of his general Essay on the Health of Seamen. I do not find evidence of Lind's having ever served in the Navy. He graduated as M.D. in the University of Edinburgh in 1748, was elected Fellow of the Edinburgh College of Physicians in 1750, and seems to have remained resident in Edinburgh till 1758, when he was appointed Physician to the Royal Hospital at Haslar. He retained that office for many years, eventually assisted in it by his son; and I do not know that he had retired from it before his death, which took place at Gosport in 1794.

† Advertisement to third edition of Essay.

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become an almost forgotten disease, is due emphatically to Lind: and to him therefore, even thus far, we owe such saving of human life as probably to no other one man except the discoverer of vaccination. Then, as regards typhus, the value of his preventive teaching has been scarcely less conspicuous: for the circumstances of his official position gave him singular facilities out of which to corroborate Pringle's belief of the identity of "hospital-fever" with "jail-fever" and "ship-fever," and to illustrate the laws of that many-named infection: and the system of rules which he laid down for limiting its ravages in ships and populous establishments is one to which our after-times have made little or no material addition, and to which we no doubt are in great part indebted for our comparative freedom from epidemics of typhus.

Contrivances for Ventilation: Hales;

As connected with the mention of Mead and Pringle and Lind, it has to be noted, that, before their time, knowledge of the Mechanics of Air and Water had advanced to a stage in which the invention of mechanical appliances for various sanitary objects might be expected gradually to give aid to medicine; and that, during the years in which those writers were proclaiming the virtues of pure air, certain meritorious contrivances, which they could and did strongly recommend, for the ventilation of enclosed spaces, were also being made known to the public. Thus, in 1741, the already eminent physicist, Stephen Hales, read before the Royal Society an account (which he afterwards published in a separate volume) of an instrument invented by him for changing the close air of given spaces: a sort of double bellows, which, when worked by hand, would, by each of its halves alternately exhaust and supply air from and into the space which had to be ventilated.* And in 1742 Dr.

* See by Stephen Hales, D.D., F.R.S., *A Description of Ventilators:* "whereby great quantities of Fresh Air may with ease be conveyed into Mines, Gaols, Hospitals, Workhouses and Ships, in exchange for their Noxious Air. An account also of their great usefulness in many other respects:" &c. &c. &c. &c. London, 1743. See also, in continuation of the above, *A Treatise on Ventilators: Part Second:* "wherein an Account is given of the Happy Effects of the several Trials that have been made of them in different ways and for different purposes: which has occasioned their being received with general approbation and applause on account of their utility for the great benefit of mankind: as also of what farther hints and improvements in several other useful ways have occurred since the publication of the former Treatise: London, 1758."

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Sutton.

Mead brought before the Royal Society a different contrivance by Mr. Samuel Sutton, which was meant at the moment only for ships, but could with modification be adapted to any houses or parts of them, or to the wards of prisons or hospitals, &c.: being, said Dr. Mead, "no more than this,—that, whereas, in every ship of any bulk, there is already provided a copper or boiling-place proportionable to the size of the vessel, it is proposed to clear the bad air by means of the fire already used under the said coppers or boiling-places for the necessary uses of the ship."* The two contrivances came into extensive use during the middle vicennium of last century: Dr. Hales's "*lungs*," mentioned with praise by Pringle and Lind, seem to have been often advantageously used in ships, prisons and hospitals;† and Mr. Sutton, who in 1745 obtained a patent for his invention, was, after a long interval, ordered by the Lords of the Admiralty to adapt his "*fire-pipes*" to His Majesty's Navy.‡ Readers of the present day who may find it hard to imagine the "putrid" quality of the atmospheres which in those days the inmates of prisons and ships and barracks and hospitals had to breathe, can well assist their imagination by referring to the pages of Hales and other contemporary reformers.

Thus already the better teaching which had become current as to the causes of disease was beginning to be followed by better practice; which in its turn, through the results to be obtained from it, would become the most influential of all teachings; and in that point of view, the proceedings of the Royal Society, at its anniversary meeting of 1776, may be referred to for an illustration which is monumental.

* See in second volume of Dr. Mead's Works, Edinburgh edition, 1765.

† See Dr. Hales's above-mentioned "second part." London, 1758.

‡ Record of the concession to Mr. Sutton is made in the *Annual Register* for 1764, incidentally to the biographical notice then given of Dr. Hales who had died in 1761. The writer of the notice, after stating that Sutton obtained the order "after ten years' solicitation supported by influence of Dr. Mead," proceeds, in terms of which I am not sure whether they are used in sycophancy or in sarcasm,—"His contrivance to preserve his fellow-creatures from pestilential diseases was rewarded by a permission to put it in practice: an instance of attention to the public, and liberality to merit, which must reflect everlasting honor upon the great names who at that time presided over the affairs of this Kingdom."

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Captain Cook's application of hygienic rules.

From early in the century the Royal Society had had in its award (under bequest of Sir Godfrey Copley) an annual medal, by which to express year by year its grateful recognition of the best works submitted to it in matters of experimental science; and in 1776 that Copley Medal was awarded to Captain Cook, in honour of his paper, communicated to the Society earlier in the year, on *The Method taken for preserving the Health of the Crew of His Majesty's Ship, the* RESOLUTION, *during her late Voyage round the World.* Sir John Pringle was then the President of the Society, himself already patriarchal in Preventive Medicine, and he necessarily spoke of Cook's achievement in language of the deepest sympathy. The intention of this "honorary premium," he said, "is to crown that paper of the year which should contain the most useful and most successful experimental inquiry. Now, what inquiry can be so useful as that which hath for its object the saving of the lives of men? and when shall we find one more successful than that before us? Here are no vain boastings of the empiric, nor ingenious and delusive theories of the dogmatist, but a concise, an artless, and an incontested relation of the means by which under the Divine Favour Captain Cook with a company of 118 men performed a voyage of three years and eighteen days, throughout all the climates from 52° North to 71° South, with the loss of only one man by a disease." He contrasted Cook's economy of life with illustrations, which he quoted, of the wastefulness of previous experience: hideous illustrations, among which, last and not least, was the recent "victorious but mournful" expedition of Anson: and then he gave his audience full particulars of the "Method" of Cook's splendid success. The medal, with Cook's "unperishing name engraven upon it," he handed not to Cook himself (for Cook had already sailed on his last voyage) but to Cook's representative: who, he says, will be "happy to know that this respectable body never more cordially nor more meritoriously bestowed that faithful symbol of their esteem and affection: for, if Rome decreed the *civic crown* to him who saved the life of a single citizen, what wreaths are due to that man who, having himself saved many, perpetuates now in your Transactions the means by which Britain may henceforth preserve numbers of her intrepid sons, her mariners, who,

braving every danger, have so liberally contributed to the fame, to the opulence, and to the maritime empire of their country." *

With regard to Cook's "Method," and the ever-memorable success which it obtained, all who would study the case must of course bear well in mind that *Method* and *Man* were co-efficient. The success was due to the enforcement of well-known hygienic rules by a thoroughly skilled and thoroughly humane disciplinarian commander. The chief hygienic points were the following: proper provision of food, which was made to include rob of lemons and oranges, sourkrout, sugar, portable soup or broth, and malt for making sweetwort; avoidance of too long watches; avoidance of unnecessary exposure to weather; insistence on dry shifts when wet; insistence on keeping persons and hammocks clean; insistence on keeping ship clean and dry; ventilation by wind-sail and by frequent use of portable fire at bottom of well; great care for fresh water to be renewed at every opportunity; and for fresh provisions, animal and vegetable, whenever possible.

BLANE.

A few years later than this, Dr. (afterwards baronet) GILBERT BLANE began to render very influential service to the progress of Preventive Medicine. During the last three or four years of the American war, he served with much distinction as Physician to Lord Rodney's Fleet in the West Indies; and, early in this service, being shocked with the quantity of disease which he found prevailing and believed to be in great part preventable, he took two practical steps in the matter. First, in 1780, by a printed tract addressed to the flag-officers and captains of the fleet, and which he says "was extremely well received," he endeavoured to enlighten them as to means which might be used for maintaining the health and vigour of the men, and for preventing invasions of disease, and for benefiting the sick; and as to the degree in which the application of such means "depended on the good judgment and exertion of officers, who alone could establish and enforce the regulations respecting ventilation,

* See *Philosophical Transactions*, 1776, or Dr. Kippis's separate publication of Pringle's *Six Presidential Addresses*

cleanliness, and discipline." And secondly, in 1781, when he accompanied Lord Rodney in a short visit to England, he addressed to the Board of Admiralty an admirably frank and judicious statement of reforms which he thought necessary for the health of the navy. The end of the war in 1783 allowed Blane to settle in London, where he was almost immediately appointed physician to St. Thomas's Hospital; and 1785 he published the results of his special experience and reading in a considerable systematic treatise, entitled, *Observations on the Diseases of Seamen*.* This work, though perhaps not scientifically a very material addition to the teachings of Lind and Cook, was at least a very opportune corroboration of them; and soon afterwards Blane, in being appointed Commissioner for Sick and Wounded Seamen, and Chief Officer of the Navy Medical Board under the Admiralty, had facilities, which he zealously turned to invaluable account, on the one hand for increasing his knowledge, and on the other hand for bringing into application the sanitary reforms which he had advocated. Partly as the practical initiator of those naval sanitary reforms, and partly in respect of subsequent writings, hereafter to be named, Blane appears to deserve mention with Mead and Pringle and Lind, as one of the most effective of the early promoters of Modern Preventive Medicine.

In 1796, the year after his appointment to the Medical Board, the famous reform was made which gave *Lemon-juice* to the British Navy. How long before that time the world had been aware of the special anti-scorbutic value of the citric fruits is not positively known; but it is at least certain that, nearly two hundred years before, there was some such knowledge in existence: for, in 1601, as Purchas most graphically shows,† the virtue of lemon-juice against scurvy was illustrated in the first voyage made for the East India Company under Elizabeth's Charter of 1600: and in 1617, this value of *Lemon-juice* was especially insisted on by John Woodall, at that time Surgeon-

* Subsequent editions of this work appeared in 1790, 1799, and 1803. As an Appendix to its second part, which is on the Causes of Disease in Fleets, and the means of Prevention, he gives the Memorial which he addressed to the Admiralty in 1781, and a further Memorial submitted in 1782.

† See his *Pilgrimes*, London, 1625, vol. i. p. 147.

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General to the East India Company, and afterwards surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital.*

BAKER.

Of the beginnings of modern Preventive Medicine in the publications of the eighteenth century, highly important sections are represented by the names of the four writers already mentioned; but two workers have yet to be named, each of whom had a special section to himself. Of these, one was Dr. (afterwards baronet) GEORGE BAKER: who in 1767 read before the London College of Physicians, and then published in a pamphlet of sixty pages, his *Essay concerning the Cause of the Endemial Colic of Devonshire.* The disease which was in question, the associated colic and palsy of Devonshire, was one of serious danger to those who suffered it; and it was so frequent in the county that, for instance, the Exeter Hospital alone during the years 1762–7 had among its in-patients an annual average of nearly sixty cases of it. In particular years it would be in extreme prevalence. Thus in the winter of 1724–5, Dr. Huxham (who practised at Plymouth) found it "so vastly common that there was scarce a family amongst the lower rank of people that had it not, and he often saw five or six lying ill of it in the same house." † The gist of Baker's *Essay* was a demonstration that the disease of which he wrote was simply an effect of lead-poisoning: that the cider-drinking population was being extensively poisoned by lead which entered them with their cider in consequence of reckless applications of the metal in apparatus of cider-making and cider-storage: and he concludes his few pages with a hope that this "discovery of a poison which has for many years exerted its virulent effects on the inhabitants of Devonshire, incorporated with their daily liquor, unobserved and unsuspected, may be esteemed by those who have power, and have opportunities to remove the source of so much mischief, to be an object worthy of their most serious attention." Measured by world-wide standards, it was not a very large field of human suffering, into which this man came as emancipator: but his work was of the rare quality which commands prompt and complete success: he had studied his case

* See his *Surgeon's Mate*, 1617; and his *Various Treatises*, 1639.

† As quoted by Dr. Guy in his interesting *Lectures on Public Health*, p. 137.

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thoroughly well, his proofs were consummately good, and under the influence of his discovery a grievous endemic affliction rapidly became extinct where it had been habitual.

JENNER.

The other remaining name, the name with which the century closes, is the name of EDWARD JENNER. It was in the year 1798 (the year in which the nations of the Continent were learning from republican France its newly-invented art of military conscription) that an English village-doctor, publishing his *Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of the Variolæ Vaccinæ*, counterpoised from beforehand, so far as such counterpoise could be, the cruelties of mutual slaughter which men were then preparing for each other on a scale not before known to the world. The present mention of Jenner's discovery of vaccination is meant only as a passing memorandum of the date at which so great a redemption from disease first became available to mankind;* but in connexion with that reference, it may here conveniently be noticed that the earliest endeavour of the eighteenth century for any purpose of Preventive Medicine had been, like this last, an endeavour in relation to smallpox: consisting in the introduction and extensive practice of smallpox-inoculation as a process by which individuals might hope to secure themselves against severe attacks of the disease.† Smallpox-inoculation initiated, in the first vicennium of the eighteenth century, an entirely new line of medical thought as to the mitigabilities of disease; and particularly, as to the one disease with which it

* I think it unnecessary to enlarge my present text by entering on details as to the history of Jenner's discovery, or as to the triumphs of vaccination; but I shall hereafter refer to occasions on which I have had to be official reporter or parliamentary witness with regard to those matters. While these pages are in the press, a recently-appointed Royal Commission is receiving evidence on the subject of vaccination; and I venture to predict that the new evidence (so far as it may regard the merits of the discovery) will establish more firmly than ever that Jenner's services to mankind, in respect of the saving of life, have been such that no other man in the history of the world has ever been within measurable distance of him.

† On one of the occasions referred to in the last footnote, I told at length the story of the temporary acceptance and the eventual abandonment of smallpox-inoculation; and the reasons which excuse me from repeating here the history of vaccination will excuse me also from repeating that of smallpox-inoculation. It will be found in the first chapter of my *Papers relating to the History and Practice of Vaccination*, 1857.

dealt, it prepared the popular as well as the medical mind to accept with comparative readiness the invention which, at the end of the century, came so beneficently to supersede it.

"Alms for oblivion."*

It is a favorite reflexion among philosophers, that, if departed great benefactors of our race could now and then look down on the harvest-fields where mankind age after age is gladdened by the fruits of their labor, they would in general find themselves less remembered than perhaps their terrestrial ambitions had desired. Doubtless this is so; but let the noble compensation be noted, that often the thoroughness of a reformer's victory is that which most makes silence of the reformer's fame. For, how can men be adequately thankful for redemptions, when they have no present easy standard, no contrast between yesterday and to-day, by which to measure the greatness of them? And to some readers that reflexion may well occur at this present point, as they say their *benedicite* for our workers of the eighteenth century. Of the present generation who in summer holidays enjoy their draught of cider in Devonshire, not many know that Baker unpoisoned it for them. Of those who go down to the sea in ships, not many have reading and imagination enough to contrast the sea-life which now is with the sea-life which was suffered in Anson's days, and to be grateful for Lind and Blane who made the difference. And, in some such cases, ignorance best tells its tale by swaggering against the truce which protects it. At the anti-vaccination meetings of which we now occasionally read, where some pragmatical quack pretends to be making mincemeat of Jenner, how small would become the voice of the orator, and how abruptly would the meeting dissolve itself, if but for a moment the leash were away with which Jenner's genius holds back the pestilence, and smallpox could start into form before the meeting as our grandfathers saw it but a century ago.

Blane's later publications.

From the end of the eighteenth century to the time in the nineteenth when the reign of Her present Majesty began, there were not any such momentous initiations in Preventive Medicine as those for which the eighteenth century had deserved grateful recollection; but the years nevertheless had their own kind of

* Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III., Sc. 3.

value. Especially they made a period of educational activity. The new discoveries were getting to be known and applied; the new ways of looking at disease, as something which might often be easily prevented, were getting to be extensively familiar; and, as time went on, competent witnesses were again and again coming forward, to tell how they had experimented with the new knowledge, and had won victories by it. Of the men who in those years were educating the Medical Profession to appreciate the great new career of usefulness which had been opened to it, the foremost was Sir GILBERT BLANE, whose name has already been mentioned, and whose life, happily prolonged till 1834, was to the end distinguished by zeal for the public service. In papers which he from time to time, during the years 1812–19, addressed to the Royal Med. Chi. Society, and in others, with which the above were reprinted in 1822, and with further additions in 1833, under the title of *Select Dissertations on Several Subjects of Medical Science*, Blane may almost be said to have founded a new branch of professional teaching; and most important indeed it was for our coming times that, on the threshold of them, there was yet living from the former age an intermediary, experienced and enlightened as he was, to hand on to us, as incentive to further progress, his records of the progress which had been already made. Such especially were his papers on the Comparative Health of the British Navy from the year 1779 to the year 1829, on the Comparative Health and Population of England at different periods, and on the Comparative Prevalence and Mortality of different Diseases in London, and his Statement of Facts tending to establish an estimate of the true value, and present state of Vaccination. Admirable also for the time when they were written were his papers on Yellow Fever, on Intermittent Fevers, and on Infection.

THACKRAH.

Beyond what was done during those years to diffuse and apply the thoughts which the preceding century had originated, one very important new line of thought in Preventive Medicine was opened for England in 1831, by Mr. C. TURNER THACKRAH, a surgeon of Leeds: who in that year published a work (next year republished with large additions) on *The Effects of Arts,*

Trades and Professions, and of civic states and habits of living, on Health and Longevity: with suggestions for the removal of many of the agents which produce disease and shorten the duration of life. In the medical literature of Europe, Thackrah's work was not the first to invite attention to the subject of industrial diseases: for in Italy, a hundred and fifty years before, Ramazzini had written comprehensively on the subject according to the lights of his time;* and quite recently in France—(besides that in 1822 M. Patissier had published a general work† founded on that of Ramazzini)—many sections of the subject had been separately treated by writers who more or less had made new study of them.‡ Though those foreign works could hardly be of any direct bearing on the conduct of English industries, their existence may have suggested to Thackrah, how desirable it had become for our country that the health and sanitary circumstances of its various branches of industry should be investigated in the spirit of modern Preventive Medicine by some skilled inquirer. This special service Thackrah set himself to render: not under any official obligation or inducement, nor with any subvention from government, but as his own free gift to a public cause; and in his inquiry, which extended to about 250 branches of English industry, and included all the chief employments of the population, he dwelt on the details of each industry so far as he found them to be of significance to health. Not less meritorious than the assiduity and the care for truth with which he collected his facts, were the unprejudiced good sense and moderation with which he weighed them; and the service thus rendered by Thackrah deserves grateful recognition.§ By his eminently trustworthy

* *De Morbis Artificum diatriba:* Modena, 1670 and 1700; and Padua, 1713. The work was translated into several European languages; among which, into English in 1725.

† *Traité des Maladies des Artisans, et de celles qui résultent des diverses Professions*, d'après Ramazzini, par Ph. Patissier, Paris, 1822.

‡ As particularly in the *Annales d'Hygiène Publique et de Méd. Légale*, and in the two cyclopædic medical dictionaries which were being published in Paris during those years.

§ Mr. Ikin, of Leeds, speaking of his fellow-townsman Thackrah in the *Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal*, 1851, says:—"Leeds suffered a great loss in his premature death." . . . . "He was an early and successful promoter of public hygiene, then in its infancy. I must also in bare justice couple his

book, he, more than fifty years ago, made it a matter of common knowledge, and of State responsibility, that, with certain of our chief industries, special influences, often of an evidently removable kind, are apt to be associated, which, if permitted to remain, give painful disease and premature disablement or death to the employed persons.

name with the earliest founders of provincial medical schools, and commend him as a most zealous promoter and teacher of anatomical science: indeed the profession and public of Leeds owe him much, for it was he who first gave a public course of anatomical lectures in this place, and his exertions ultimately gave origin to the more effective organisation of the Leeds Medical School."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GROWTH OF HUMANITY IN BRITISH POLITICS.

At the point which the medical narrative has now reached, retrospective note has to be made of some accumulating non-medical influences which will be factors in the further history. While medical observers had been advancing (as before stated) in the science of the prevention of disease, the national common-sense, which in time was to absorb and apply the better medical knowledge, had not been standing still. Within the period of a century and a half, from the accession of William the Third to the death of William the Fourth, the country had made extraordinary progress in the art of seeing old questions in new lights; and in no respect had that progress been more remarkable than in respect of the force which common humanitarian sentiments had gained in the minds of the younger generations. Especially the later half of the period was characterised by the vehement growth of such sentiments; and the change has been of so much interest to the main subject-matter of this narrative that it seems to claim more than a passing reference.

Special influences making for the New Humanity of the 18th century.*

The New Humanity of the eighteenth century represented two separate and dissimilar (though often co-operating) influences: one dating from the second quarter of the century, and one dating from the fourth: the former expressly religious, and in great part identified with the "evangelical revivals" for which that period was remarkable; the latter, essentially an outcome of stimulated political reflexion.

England in 1738.

The date at which the earlier of those influences began to

* The phrase "New Humanity" is one which I owe (with much else) to my reading of the late Mr. John Richard Green's *History of the English People*. The "larger sympathy of man with man which especially marks the eighteenth century as a turning-point in the history of the human race" is a text on which Mr. Green dwells with evident delight in Books viii. and ix. of his learned and eloquent work; and for my present chapter I can wish nothing better than that it may reflect the spirit of Mr. Green's deeply appreciative references to this part of the national progress.

make itself felt is conveniently remembered as the year 1738, half a century from the dethronement of James the Second, and a century before the coronation of our present Queen. At that date, when George the Second had been eleven years King, and Sir Robert Walpole seventeen years Prime Minister, England at large was in circumstances of unwonted ease. The Hanoverian succession had been made secure; and the Prime Minister with his merits and successes (to say nothing of the bribery which was then a ministerial resource) was showing himself more than a match for the "patriots" who wanted his place. The late times had been extraordinarily without war; commerce was making very large gains: agriculture, partly through real increase of skill, and partly from accidental conditions, was in high prosperity; manufactures, hitherto in great part domestic, and but partially separated from agriculture, were jogging on comfortably under their old low-pressure system; and even the rural labourers were having a comparatively good time.* At the highest levels of society, the contentment was particularly serene; for the public service in all its branches offered ample opportunities for the satisfaction of privileged family-interests, and dignitaries of all sorts were deeply convinced that they were in the best of all possible worlds. The ample official testimony which would have been borne to the admirableness of the existing order of things could have been confirmed by so many opulent and most respectable citizens that apparently the last word on the subject would have been said. Yet in truth that was not the whole story. England, no doubt, was in a rude sort of comfort, but was more plethoric and less awake than might have been wholesomer. The country had had some very hard-working centuries: its process of getting a free constitution for itself had involved long dire conflicts: and now, with the Georgian calm, when armour had at last been put off, and easy times had begun, it was

* See chapter xvii. of Professor Thorold Rogers's *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*. See also the late Mr. Arnold Toynbee's *Lectures*, p. 53. In the last I read (as a quotation from Fox Bourne's *Romance of Trade*) that the year with which my text starts was critical even in records of industry: namely, that the fly-shuttle, "the first of the great inventions which revolutioned the woollen industry . . . enabling a weaver to do his work in half the time, and making it possible for one man instead of two to weave the widest cloth," was invented in 1738 by Kay, a native of Bury, Lancashire.

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enjoying in its Saxon way a sort of holiday-rest from troubles and serious reflexions. With little going forth of thought into space or time, but with much, and indeed often far too much, of eating and drinking, England (so to speak) was taking its ease in its inn. The predominant middle-class type of the time, bluff and brawny, the eighteenth century *John Bull* of friends and foes, was a being in whom three-fourths of the nature were hitherto unawakened; and, of the fourth which had been awakened, a very marked proportion was egotistic and coarse. The social principles which had been most impressed on him were principles of a combative sort: that his house was his castle; that he had a right to do as he liked with his own; that he could thrash any number of foreigners; and so on. Field sports by day, and boisterous conviviality by night, were large items in his *Whole Duty of Man*. Not to be a milk-sop was so essential, that his going to bed every night drunk or half-drunk was of no particular disgust to the ladies of his family; and Hogarth and Fielding and Smollett are witnesses enough, how much beastliness of that sort, and how much grossness and vice of other kinds, pervaded the common life of the time. At the higher levels of society, which preeminently were abodes of self-satisfaction, the common faults of the time were not at their least, and vices distinctively their own were added. Their atmosphere was surcharged with corruption. Politics meant place-hunting; and for place, whether in Church or State, any amount of dirt would be eaten. The Queen, who had done much to keep her husband straight in his exercise of power, was now (since last November) no more; and his widowed Majesty, mindful of the famous last promise he had given her, was importing from Hanover, to be British fountain of honour for the rest of his reign, and shortly to be created Countess of Yarmouth, the woman who three years before had bargained him her adultery for his ducats.* The strong and sagacious Prime Minister, a typically jovial Englishman of the time, had accepted as the necessity of his position, that he could only govern by means of bribes; and he is reported to have said of the House of Commons of his time, that every man of them had his price. The dignitaries of the Church were not above the average of the corrupt coarse world around them; bishops and other high clergy

* See Lord Hervey's Memoirs: vol. i. pp. 499-502; and vol. ii. p. 514.

were among the chief flatterers of the court; and the parish parson was commonly more given to hunt and drink with the squire than to be of guiding moral influence with the people. So, on the whole, in spite of what optimists might have said, the England of 1738 had in it room for improvement, and was far from having reached such perfection that its appointed guides and rulers were quite entitled to be so soundly sleeping the sleep of the just.

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The Methodists and other religious revivers.

In that year, the general social atmosphere being as described, the first of the two great influences of the eighteenth century began to operate. Then namely it was, that John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield (having one by one returned home from a missionary enterprise which had taken them for a year or two to Georgia) began to exercise in this country the powerfully proselytising influence with which their names are identified: the influence by which they and their followers rapidly converted into a popular enthusiasm the distinctive religious spirit which the Wesleys, with a few others, had professed at Oxford ten years before, and for which they had then been known by the nickname of *Methodists*. The Methodist revival which began in 1738 soon led to many other religious revivals, more or less akin to itself, and before the end of the century had exerted a great awakening and reforming influence on the previously inactive official Church. The widely-diffused new enthusiasm—which for the present purpose needs not be distinguished into its component forces, but may as regards them all be termed evangelical, was in some respects comparable to that which five centuries before had created the Friarhoods of the Papal Church; but it was distinctively, even extremely, Protestant in its character, and may indeed in the main be regarded as a recandescence of the old puritan piety of Stuart and Tudor times. Between the elder and the younger puritanism however there was this marked difference of relation,—that, whereas the elder had had almost no exterior life except in ways of civil conflict, and had itself generally been more or less under proscription, "in darkness and with dangers compassed round," the new puritanism had the better fortune of being allowed peaceful scope for its enthusiasms, and of being therefore more obviously

confronted, *in foro conscientiæ*, with those altruistic responsibilities which its profession of Christianity implied. So the Protestant congregations, now that at last their time of peace had come, shewed themselves zealous in works of benevolence. Their primary aim was to make religious converts; but, little by little, the circumstances widened the aim. Above all, the home-missions which were so active could not but bring back to the congregations a practical and sympathetic knowledge of the hard struggles, and the often cruel sufferings, which the poorer masses of mankind have to endure. Poverty began to be considered, as perhaps never before, by the prosperous parts of society: poverty, not merely as subject to physical privations: but poverty, as complicated with the caducity and helplessness of ignorance; poverty, as aggravated by the so frequent hindrances and oppressions of disease; poverty, as susceptible of deepest heartache when the pomps and luxuries of civilisation seem to deride it. By degrees, the dynamics of pauperisation, the study of the various factors which are degradatory in social life, were seen to be more urgent religious problems than some which had exercised schoolmen and mystics; and vagrancy and vice and crime, when the conditions of their multitudinous production had grown to be better understood, were felt to be piteous appeals to the strong of the world, brothers' blood crying from the earth. So, from the middle of the century onward, the evangelical revival carried among its chief consequences, that man learnt to feel new solicitudes for man; and under the new influence, new associations were extensively organised for dealing with the various sorts of social evil. Side by side with the ordinary efforts of doctrinal missionary enterprise, activity (such as had been comparatively suspended in England during our two centuries of ecclesiastic and civil unsettlement) was devoted to establishing new hospitals and dispensaries for the sick, and new refuges for various classes of destitute and afflicted persons; important special societies were founded for the purpose of reclaiming and reforming the vicious and criminal; and not least, various local efforts began to be made to provide elementary education for the children of the poor.*

* Robert Raikes of Gloucester began his Sunday Schools in 1781, and the Lancaster-and-Bell Schools began before the end of the century.

Concerned here only with the philanthropical results of the movement, and with them only for the hundred years from when they began, we need not discuss the general effect which the movement produced on the habits and moral tone of the country; nor new bearings which the movement has within the last half-century assumed; nor the worthy emulation with which, chiefly within that time, labours, analogous to those of the 'evangelical' school, have been instituted in other schools of the Church: but, waiving mention of the later times, and emphasising in the earlier only the characteristic which most concerns this narrative, we have, as the essential fact, that, throughout the centennium 1738–1838, the tide of religious philanthropy was ever on the rise, ever gaining more and more social influence. Preachers, often not in accord on matters of doctrine and discipline, and often spending themselves overmuch on minor points of sectarian difference, were yet unanimous in dwelling on the sentiment of human brotherhood, and in claiming practical effect from that sentiment. In proportion as there resulted practical endeavours to give help to classes which needed it, miscellaneous thousands from the surrounding world came to co-operate in the good work; thousands, who often were in no particular sympathy with the doctrinal specialties of the new school, or might even be such as the school would deem pagans, but who, caring less for doctrinal differences than for practical outcome, were glad to join in enterprises of kindness to their fellow-men; and, as years moved on, co-operations of that sort, in favour of practical humanity, came to be powerful in the councils of the nation.

New political influences.

In the political, as in the religious humanitarianism of the eighteenth century, there was a rekindling of old embers. The immortal reasonings of Milton and Locke, and that voice of popular statecraft which had made itself heard in the Grand Remonstrance of 1642 and the Revolution of 1688–9, had been of effect beyond these islands; and during the latter half of the eighteenth century, re-verberation of those great English utterances, coming back emphatically from other shores, gave to the English memory of them a new fruitfulness. Especially the two great revolts of the last quarter of the century—first, in 1776, the Declaration of Independence of the British North American

Colonies, and secondly, in 1789–90, the momentous beginnings of the French Revolution, were of immense educational influence in this country; and the date of the former of those events may be used to define the time from which the particular new lines of political thought began to be noticeable in this country.

The year 1776, the year of the American Declaration of Independence, will probably never be remembered in this country without a touch of pain—the kind of pain with which any reasonable old man would remember to have been wrong-headed and ill-tempered with the brother of his youth; but, except in that sense, the year may well be remembered without regret. To have been worsted in the civil conflict which began in that year was the proper punishment of the ill-advised obstinacy which would have it so: the well-deserved success of the revolt, though temporarily mortifying to England, was a world-wide consecration of English principles of liberty: and while, to the United States, it was the beginning of boundless national expansion, to England it was almost equally initiative as a lesson in practical politics. Even were it only in that and some other allied senses, England would have to regard the year 1776 as one of demarcation between her old political times and her new; but in fact there are other associations which strengthen the significance of the date. From 1776, namely, dates the beginning of the influence of two British writers, who have conduced, perhaps more than any two of any country or of any time, to the interests of peaceful political progress: for, in 1776, modern political economy began with the publication of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations;* and in 1776, a so-called *Fragment on Government*, published at first without the author's name, opened the series of monumental works by which Jeremy Bentham pioneered for his countrymen in the whole philosophy of constitutional and administrative reform.

Greatly increased popular discussion of principles of government.

The impulses which in 1776 and 1789 were given to the political education of this country by the great revolutionary movements of those years, and which after the later date became immensely powerful, arose of course from the discussion of the events: not in virtue of the mere emotions of sympathy or antipathy which were felt for or against one side or the other by persons more or less prejudiced in opinion: but in virtue of the

facts and arguments with which those emotions were defended, and of the unprecedented degree in which the abstract principles of good government, the reciprocal rights and duties of governors and governed, the conditions of political stability, and indeed the whole theory and practice of social organisation, were brought into daily popular discussion, and were examined from the most different standpoints. This, too, was not an affair of mere speculative talk, as revolving some text of the *Utopia* or the *New Atlantis* in tranquil academic atmospheres; but the arguments, passionately set forth by way of comment on passing events, were debated in popular assemblies and popular tracts as of urgent practical interest; and those discussions of the "rights of man," however much of drawn battle they may have shown as between parties resolved to differ, and however small may have been at first their influence on the statutes of the realm, gave to vast numbers of persons an introduction to the rudiments of political thought, and greatly contributed to predestine for British politics the new spirit of the century which was next to come. For, out of the popular formulations of opinion to which they led, there soon came these two important consequences: first, that complaints, sometimes very loud complaints, began to be heard, of particular grievances which parts of the population were suffering; and secondly, that strong signs of sympathy with the aggrieved classes began to be shown by persons who themselves were not sufferers.

Altruism in politics.

In the latter respect, the sober outcome of the discussions accorded very largely with that which the evangelical movement had been yielding; the one, like the other, was having a marked altruistic operation: and whether this New Humanity expressed particular theological beliefs, or explained itself on grounds of political utility, equally it helped men to better notions of legislation and government than they had yet had. The elementary principles on which society has to rest and advance, the implied contract of mutual helpfulness, the supreme sanctity of equal justice, the essential coherence of social duties with social rights,—these, and the like, were found as enforceable from the religious as from the political point of view, and could not but gain through being enforced from both. No wonder that, under the joint influence, England advanced

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immensely in its understanding of social questions, and that unaggrieved persons of humane mind were largely impelled to range themselves on the side of aggrieved classes, and to support their demand for legislative reforms.

Demands for new legislation.

Among the many grievances which at that time affected large numbers of persons, those which concerned the distribution of political power for the respective purposes of national and local government, were by general consent placed in the first rank of importance: changes being demanded, which should give to the House of Commons, and to the Municipal Corporations, an electoral basis far wider, and a character far more equally representative of the population at large, than they had hitherto had; and should dissociate the question of a man's right to take part in the government of the country from the question of his ecclesiastical relations. Another main demand of the time, particularly among the better informed classes, was in respect of Law Reform: there being serious grievance in the survival of statutes which had been enacted in comparatively barbarous periods: such as the Labor and Apprenticeship Acts, which, having begun in Plantagenet and been re-inforced in Tudor times, were still standing as a stupid obstruction to freedom of industry; or such again as the laws relating to criminals and persons suspected of crime, and especially those savage parts of the law which regulated the punishment of offenders: while another serious grievance consisted in the mal-administration of common civil justice, and in the terrible delays and difficulties which at the time made justice in certain cases unattainable except to wealthy persons.* To remove grievances such as those was almost as plainly an act of humanity in politics, as the giving of charitable

* A sketch of the various grievances as they existed at the beginning of the century is retrospectively given by Sydney Smith in the collected edition of his works—he having been among the leading "reformers" of the time:—"The Catholics were not emancipated—the Corporation and Test Acts were unrepealed—the Game Laws were horribly oppressive—Steel Traps and Spring Guns were set all over the country—Prisoners tried for their Lives could have no Counsel—Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery pressed heavily upon mankind—Libel was punished by the most cruel and vindictive imprisonments—the principles of Political Economy were little understood—the Law of Debt and of Conspiracy were upon the worst possible footing—the enormous wickedness of the Slave Trade was tolerated—a thousand evils were in existence, which the talents of good and able men have since lessened and removed."

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succour to the impotent poor is an act of common human kindliness; and its significance in that respect is only expressed in another form, when it is described as an act of political utility.

New spirit reflected in the common literature of the time.

The humanitarian spirit, which sprang with so much freshness from its above-described two great sources in the eighteenth century, and was destined to be of ruling effect in the nineteenth, was represented on an immense scale in the literature of the period in which it arose.* It is not only to be traced in the religious and political writings which more or less professedly deal with it, but is pervasive of the common literature. Especially the poets of the time represented and greatly extended the influence. Of the old pastoral poetry, the yawn-provoking shepherds and shepherdesses slumbered off into mantel-piece figures of Chelsea china: its frivolous inanities gave place to sincere expressions of feeling: and when Goldsmith and Cowper and Crabbe and Burns began to write as they felt of human life, tens of thousands who had never troubled themselves to read argumentative works of divinity or politics were awakened to new sympathies with their fellowmen.

First efforts and successes in Parliament.

The earlier struggles of the New Humanity in English public life, and the first successes which they achieved, have their great place in English History, and happily are matter which may now be regarded as away from party contentions. In relation to most of the cases, during the time when the struggles were in progress, no doubt party spirit was often high, and parties were bitterly against each other; but in time the contests were fought out to ends which silenced controversy; and, with regard to all the main questions, the results which were then arrived at have probably for the last half-century been approved by all parties, with no material difference of opinion, as matter for national satisfaction and pride. In that view of the case, it may be convenient to illustrate the argument

* Of this I cannot pretend to treat with any proper fulness; and instead of attempting a superficial treatment of so interesting a subject, I gladly refer to the volumes in which Mr. Leslie Stephen gives his admirable account of all the best thought of the eighteenth century.

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Prison Reform: John Howard.

of this present chapter, by describing more fully some particular passages of the movement.

It was near the middle of the eighth decennium of the century, when the new sentiment struck its memorable first note in the House of Commons. Contemporaneously with the great sanitary experiment which Captain Cook had been conducting in far distant parts of the world, and for the triumphant issue of which he (as before told) was about to be honored by the Copley Medal of the Royal Society, a certain Bedfordshire squire had been making his never-to-be-forgotten studies of the horrors of Prison Life in England; and if the Royal Society's recognition of Cook's achievement was a moment of almost romantic interest in the sciential relations of Preventive Medicine, not less brilliant an *instantia lampadis* in the moral relations of the subject was the coming of JOHN HOWARD before the House of Commons on the 4th of March, 1774, to testify what he had then lately seen in the famous *Winter's Journey* with which his long series of labours began, and to receive the thanks of the House for a kind of devotion not hitherto familiar to politicians. In the *Annual Register* of 1774, the incident is briefly described:—"The House of Commons went into a Committee of Inquiry into abuses committed in gaols by detaining persons for their fees, Sir Thomas Clavering, Chairman. Dr. Fothergill and Surgeon Potts [Mr. Percivall Pott] were called in, and asked their opinions on the gaol distemper. . . . Mr. Howard, Sheriff of Bedford, was called, and gave the House an account that he had seen thirty-eight out of forty-two gaols in the Lent circuit, besides others as Bristol, Ely, Litchfield, &c. That those he had not seen, in a few days he should set out to visit. . . . He was asked his reasons for visiting the gaols, and answered that he had seen and heard the distress of gaols, and had an earnest desire to relieve it in his own district as well as others. He was then asked if it was done at his own expense, he answered undoubtedly. . . . . The thanks of the House were deservedly and unanimously returned to this benevolent Gentleman; who at a great expense, and the continual risque of his life, has thus nobly shewn himself the friend of mankind in general, and of the unfortunate in particular."

The particular motive which had started Howard on that

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memorable *Journey* of visitation to the prisons of England was to see if he could furnish the Bedfordshire Justices with any precedent for paying the gaoler of the county-prison a fixed salary. Fully to appreciate the meaning of Howard's search, a knowledge of the prison system of 1773 is necessary; and as the same information serves also to illustrate the hitherto imperfect humanity of those pre-sanitary times, I proceed to quote the substance of the description which Dr. Guy gives in his admirable *Lecture* on Howard's Journey.* The prisons, says Dr. Guy, were private property, let out at heavy rentals by gentlemen, noblemen, church dignitaries, and ecclesiastical corporations, to some of the worst of mankind. They were often so dilapidated and insecure that, for that reason if for no other, men and even women were manacled and fastened to the walls or floor. The gaolers at their best could scarcely afford to be tender-hearted. Among the prisons which Howard visited, there was not one where the gaoler was paid by salary. In lieu of salary he was allowed to charge certain fees; and every prisoner, whatever the way in which he became a prisoner, had to pay these fees before he could be permitted to leave the prison. He might be some poor debtor (for more than half the prisoners were debtors) and might perhaps have been incarcerated by a designing or vindictive creditor; he might be a man awaiting trial, and innocent of the crime with which he was charged; he might have been tried and acquitted, or the Grand Jury might not have found a true bill against him; he might be some petty offender committed for a small theft; or some pressed man innocent of everything but not having a stomach to fight; or some man of violence—highwayman, burglar, or murderer; or some defrauder, a forger or receiver of stolen goods; or

* *John Howard's Winter's Journey*, by Wm. A. Guy, M.D.; London, 1882. Dr. Guy, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in King's College, London, and a physician of high intelligence and culture, was for more than forty years always distinguished by the warm public-spirited interest he took in questions of social economy, as well as by the ability with which he discussed such questions; and particularly he is to be remembered as one of the ablest and most respected of the men who won early hearing in this country for the lessons of preventive medicine. I know no better book for popular reading in introduction to sanitary politics than the twelve *Public Health Lectures* which Dr. Guy delivered at King's College, and subsequently published: Renshaw, 1870–4. Dr. Guy died in October, 1885.

perhaps he might be some raving madman: but whatever he was, he must pay the gaoler's fees, or remain in prison. No pay, no release; and innocent men by the thousand were thus kept locked up in the prisons of England, many for years, or for life; many to die there of gaol-fever, smallpox, or other such disease; some to pass into madness or fatuity. Besides the gaoler's authorised fees, there was also an entrance fee,—technically known as garnish, footing or chummage: levied impartially on all alike, though the debtor had more to pay than the felon: a fine of some shillings (perhaps as much as eight or nine) to be expended on drink for the entertainment of the other prisoners and the benefit of the gaoler; which fine both parties were equally eager to levy—the prisoners, because it had previously been levied on themselves, and the gaoler because he either brewed the beer, or at least made a profit by selling it at the tap: and so the local law was "pay or strip"; *i.e.*, if the new comer had no money to give, his clothes were robbed from him to pay the fine.

Readers who are acquainted in detail with Howard's publications, or who in any way know what was the hellishness of ordinary English prisons at the time when Howard was visiting them, can interlineate with a context of their own the vote of thanks which the House of Commons accorded to Howard in respect of his Winter's Journey.* Not needlessly to expatiate on what was horrid and shameful in those scenes, it may here be enough to recall as to part of the "continual risque of life" which Howard faced, that the atmosphere of the prisons which he entered was distinctively the atmosphere of typhus,—that the prisons were the central seminaries and forcing-houses from which the typhus-contagion of those days was ever overflowing into fleets and barracks and hospitals, and was a constant terror to courts of justice and to the common population. It was through storms of danger such as this that Howard, as with charmed life, had calmly done what his soul gave him to do. And the exemplary career which he had thus begun was pursued by him with unwavering constancy till his death.

* As regards part of the case, I may refer to passages from Howard which I introduced long ago into one of my Reports to illustrate the history of Fever in England. See *Papers Relating to the Sanitary State of the People of England*, 1858; or in the Sanitary Institute's recent reprint, vol. i. pp. 450-1.

Dr. Aikin, in concluding his extremely interesting, and but too compressed, *View of the Character and Public Services of the late John Howard*, gives the following summary of what he did during the last seventeen years of his life:—"1773: High Sheriff of Bedfordshire; visited many county and town gaols; —1774: completed his survey of English gaols . . .; 1775: travelled to Scotland, Ireland, France, Holland, Flanders and Germany;—1776: repeated his visit to the above countries, and to Switzerland; during these two years re-visited all the English gaols; 1777: printed his *State of Prisons*;—1778: travelled through Holland, Flanders, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and part of France;—1779: re-visited all the Counties of England and Wales and travelled into Scotland and Ireland; acted as Superior of the Penitentiary Houses;—1780: printed his first Appendix; [also, in 8vo, a second edition of *Prisons*;]—1781: travelled into Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Germany, and Holland;—1782: again surveyed all the English prisons and went into Scotland and Ireland;—1783: visited Portugal, Spain, France, Flanders and Holland: also Scotland and Ireland, and viewed several English prisons;—1784: printed the second Appendix, and a new edition of the whole works;—1785–1787: from the close of the first of these years, to the beginning of the last, on his tour through Holland, France, Italy, Malta, Turkey, and Germany; afterwards, went to Scotland and Ireland;—1788: revisited Ireland, and during this and the former year travelled over all England;—1789: printed his work on Lazarettos, &c.; travelled through Holland, Germany, Prussia and Livonia to Russia and Lesser Tartary;—1790: January 20 [aged 63] died at Cherson."

Extremely noteworthy is the fact, which Dr. Guy takes pleasure in pointing out, that, before Howard began to work for mankind at large, his humanity had done its work at home; that, on his paternal estate at Cardington, "he first showed himself as a preserver of health and reformer of morals;" that here, having enlarged the estate by purchase of an adjoining farm, he "did his first work of sanitary reform, and did it, like all he undertook, thoroughly;" that "he pulled down and rebuilt every one of his own cottages, and such others as he could purchase, and erected new ones, thus gradually transforming the

whole village from damp squalor to bright wholesome cheerfulness, from sickliness to healthiness, from barbarous neglect to civilised judicious interference and supervision." *

As regards the outcome of Howard's labors, the following may be noted. As an immediate effect of his evidence before the House of Commons in 1774, two Acts of Parliament were forthwith passed: the one, to provide that gaolers should no longer be paid by fees, the other to provide for the sanitary amelioration of prisons. Since that time, under influence direct or indirect of Howard's printed works, and in conformity with his teaching, prisons and prison-administration have been so radically improved, and such elaborate precautions have been taken to guard prisoners from sanitary and other injustice, that no vestige of cruelty remains, and that the sanitary advantages of the imprisoned criminal are such as unfortunately cannot yet always be secured for outsiders who toil honestly for their bread. To Howard's influence may also be referred that more compassionate feeling on the part of society towards its various offending members, which, for instance, led the late Mrs. Fry to make herself for years the religious visitor of the female convicts in Newgate, and which since Howard's time has repeatedly led to re-consideration of the criminal code of the country, and has greatly mitigated its harshness. †

* At p. 24 of his Lecture, Dr. Guy gives an interesting account of the village as it now is. The cottages, he says, must always be the great point of attraction at Cardington. Now, after the lapse of more than a century, they seem as sound and strong as when they were first built; and having made a healthy wholesome and decent life a possibility for three generations, there is no reason why they should not continue to be a blessing to many more yet to come.

† Dr. Guy, whose writings about Howard are made especially interesting by their true congeniality with the spirit of Howard's life and labors, rightly draws attention to yet another of Howard's deserts:—"This Howard, who saw with his own eyes, and heard with his ears, and thought for himself, as only men of genius do, may be said to have invented both systematic *inspection* and periodical *reporting*, so largely practised in our days; and as happily he was a man of independent means, and could afford to give his services to the public, he appointed himself the first unpaid Inspector of Prisons, and at his own cost, published and distributed his own Reports."—*Winter's Journey*, p. 27. It may be added that Section VII. of Howard's second publication—the book on Lazarettos, &c., treats of the thirty-eight Charter Schools of Ireland; and that its observations on the particular cases are so comprehensive and exact, and its general reflexions so wise, as to suggest that Howard, if his life had been prolonged, might have been as great a reformer of Schools as he was of Prisons.

Greatest perhaps of all the outcome of Howard's work, has been the extremely impressive effect of his example. It seems to have been commonly felt by Howard's contemporaries that his seventeen years of self-imposed labour constituted one of the noblest careers which the world had hitherto known. Taking as his simple rule of duty, that his life was to be spent for the good of others, and accepting without hesitation for his field of industry that particular wild waste of misery and wrong which his temporary official contact with prison-administration had revealed to him as in urgent need of redress, he made prison-reform the object of his life, and devoted himself to that object with such sublime unselfish constancy as is among the truest measures of moral greatness. Already, here and there in history, self-devotion like his had been shown by other men,—by men, alas too few, whose memories are still the heroic leaven of our race in their power of moving others to good: but, in the successive ages and varying circumstances of the world, it is not one single type of self-devotion which can always and everywhere be the most helpful to man; and, till Howard's time, the virtue which he so transcendently displayed had little shown itself in civil life except among founders and apostles of particular ecclesiastical orders, and as instrumental in propagating theological beliefs. In the mere matter of benevolence, Howard as much took the eighteenth century by surprise as Francis of Assisi did the thirteenth; and Dante and Giotto, had they been here, might have celebrated his espousals with Pestilence as they did his predecessor's with Poverty. But, separated from each other by five centuries of time, with the immense social changes therein involved, and separated even more distantly by differences of nationality and temperament, those two great helpers of mankind had perhaps little else in common than that they both with all their hearts desired to do good to their fellow-men. Howard gathered no crowds around him, nor does any sworn order of followers bear his name. Yet truly, in addition to what he was in personal heroism of benevolence, he also by example was the founder of a new school of action: a school widely different from the Franciscan. His career was one continuous teaching that, in regard of complicated social evils, if good intentions are to be solidly effective for good, wisdom and patient intellectual study

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must be means to the end. And, great as was the career, it perhaps had no greater result than this: that it taught in a supreme degree the value of methodical or scientific, as distinguished from merely impulsive, philanthropy.

India and Edmund Burke.

During the decennium in which Howard ended his work, the public mind was being awakened on another great question of humanity: the question of the Government of India.

In 1781, in consequence of extremely untoward communications received from India,—first as to certain scandalous administrative disputes in the Bengal presidency, and secondly as to the invasion of the Carnatic by Hyder Ali,—Parliament had appointed two committees of inquiry: one on the motion of General Richard Smith, to report on the administration of justice in Bengal, and generally on the government of that presidency; the other, on the motion of the Prime Minister, to report on the causes of the Carnatic war, and on the condition of the British possessions in those parts; which latter reference was afterwards enlarged to include also the subject of the Mahratta war. Those two committees—the former having General Smith as its chairman, and Mr. Burke as its most laborious member, and the latter having Lord Advocate Dundas as its chairman and chief worker, produced reports of extraordinary importance. Of the particulars which the reports brought to light with respect to recent British conduct in India, the general bearing may be summed up in the statement: that India was being worked as a gold-mine by the agents of a London joint-stock company, and with no more sense of justice or compassion towards the human beings whom the commercial adventure affected than any later Californian or Australian gold-digger would entertain towards the dead rock under his pick-axe. The emissaries of the East India Company were subject to the one over-ruling condition, that they must work to pecuniary profits: that, irrespectively of what gains they might be putting into their own pockets, they must find means for paying dividends to the proprietary body which employed them, and for extending its possessions in the East. In that commercial spirit, an almost absolute government was being exercised in India: wars were being waged and suspended, treaties of alliance made and unmade, transfers of territory and

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revenue negotiated, privileges given and taken away; and, so far as might at any moment seem conducive to the financial aim, rulers and populations were crushed or defrauded, hereditary rights were confiscated, vast extortions were practised, pledged faith was broken, provinces were invaded and desolated, and unoffending human life in vast quantity was given over to outrage and extinction.

Facts of that sort, brought abundantly before Parliament during the years 1781–3, in the many successive reports of the two committees, were the ground on which Mr. Fox, in the autumn of 1783, proposed his memorable East India Bill, and on which afterwards the House of Commons decreed its momentous impeachment of Warren Hastings. Mr. Fox's Bill, substantially an endeavour against leaving high imperial responsibilities to be dealt with as incidents of commercial adventure, anticipated by three-fourths of a century the spirit of the India Act of 1858; but, as the Bill gave rise to one of the fiercest conflicts in the history of political parties, and soon had a sort of St. Bartholomew's day of its own,* there is need to observe that the scandals of misgovernment which led to its introduction were facts which had been equally recognised by both parties in the House; that, though, in November 1783, Mr. Dundas was sitting beside Mr. Pitt on the opposite bench to that of the promoters of the Bill, the promoters were able to appeal to him and his Committee as chief witnesses to the scandals alleged;† and that Mr. Pitt,

* Fusilade from a royal balcony could hardly have had more political effect against the promoters of the Bill, nor apparently could have taken them more by surprise, than the royal instruction, promulgated by Lord Temple, that they were to be regarded as "Enemies of the King;" and the crisis which the Bill provoked came to be of great and far-reaching effect in the relations of English political parties. It befell, namely, that, on December 17, 1783, under influence of the celebrated royal card, the Lords refused a second reading to Mr. Fox's Bill, which had recently passed the House of Commons; that his Majesty then dismissed the Ministers, and called Mr. Pitt to the Premiership; that, three months later, at general election, the constituencies sided overwhelmingly with the new ministry; and that, for many a long year afterwards, "Fox's Martyrs," as they were called, had but little weight in the government of the country.

† Even since the accession of the present Ministers, Mr. Dundas had introduced an India Bill of his own. See *Parliamentary History*, April 14, 1783. A year earlier, on behalf of the Committee, he had led the House of Commons to commence penal proceedings against the late Governor of the Madras Presidency, as guilty of high crimes and misdemeanours; and to declare it the duty of the

whose subsequent accession to power was to be through the King's defeat of the then Bill, had not hitherto (though for nearly three years a member of the House) ever spoken on Indian affairs. In 1784, after the general election which had more than reversed the relative strength of parties in the House of Commons, Mr. Pitt, carrying a bill of his own for the better government of India, established the compromise which continued till 1858; namely, that the East India Company, in respect of military and political affairs, should be subject to the direction of a *Board of Control*, forming part of the general ministry of this Kingdom. During the years 1786–7, Mr. Hastings having in the meantime retired from his Governorship of India, and returned to England, formal accusations against him were brought before the House of Commons; and the House, after debating the accusations in series, generally with much heat, and often at considerable length, eventually resolved, in respect of certain of them, that Mr. Hastings should be impeached before the House of Lords by managers whom the Commons would appoint for the purpose. In those actual resolutions for impeachment, the leaders of both parties concurred; indeed, except with Mr. Pitt's concurrence, the promoters of the impeachment could not have scored any noteworthy approximation to a vote for their object; and it is therefore clear that the legal proceedings, which ensued on the resolutions of the House of Commons, are not to be regarded as of party action.*

For the intention with which the above references are made, it is not necessary to compare the respective merits of the India-

East India Company to recall the Governor of Bombay and the Governor General of Bengal, on the ground that these functionaries had in "sundry instances acted in a manner repugnant to the honor and policy of this nation, and thereby brought great calamities on India, and enormous expenses on the East India Company." *Parliamentary History*, April and May, 1782.

* The concurrence to which the text refers must not be understood as of deeper reach than it had really had. Underneath the ceremonious accord, were the inextinguishable memories of the India Bill cyclone of 1783-4. Ostensibly, the impeachment was the act of both parties; but one of the two, the one which was immensely superior in strength, had accepted it only as of hateful necessity. In dominant parliamentary opinion, the promoters of the impeachment were but the *rari nantes* of a wrecked party, discomfited "enemies of the King;" and the fact that King and Court were still scowling at them could not but be of effect on the issue of the impeachment so far as this might have to depend on party-voting.

bills of 1783–4, nor the different opinions which have been expressed, from various points of view, on the subject of the great impeachment of 1788. The proceedings are not here brought under notice for their own sake in detail, nor even with regard to their immediate issues, but only in so far as they constituted the occasion for a new and searching exercise of national thought in matter of common right and wrong. Their interest to us is, not that they raised questions of legal kind as between England and the grand privateering company to which it had given its letters of marque, but that they raised questions as between England and mankind: for, in connexion with them, the moral responsibilities of empire in relation to subject races came to be considered in this country more critically than perhaps ever in any country before.

It was of signal advantage to the progress of political humanity, that, during the whole important period of those proceedings, the best powers of EDMUND BURKE, powers perhaps never surpassed in the British Parliament, were used on behalf of India, in protest against the tyrannies which had been inflicted, and in appeals for the just government which was due. To many of Burke's contemporaries, it was paradox or worse, that he should be as capable of anger for "trampled Hindustan" as if it had been the case of his own Bristol or Malton constituents: but his earnest devotion to the cause remains nevertheless a fact in English history; and the broadly humane spirit, in which Burke so passionately and so persistently pleaded for justice to the dependent races, made its mark in the civilisation of the world.

In order to illustrate how new a tone he brought into these discussions of Indian affairs, no further going back on parliamentary records is necessary, than to those of 1772–3; when the affairs of the East India Company had last been receiving a large share of attention in Parliament, and the conduct of Lord Clive had been impugned, and when finally Lord North's Regulating Act was passed. The questions which at that time had above all absorbed attention and drawn forth rhetoric, were in substance questions as ot the partition of spoil: questions, as to how much of it was due to the State, and how much to the proprietors of East India Stock, how much of it the great captain might retain, how much the civil and military retainers might loot, and the

like.* Those discussions had been of cruelly little interest to the despoiled: they apparently were not of higher moral significance than such as Gil Blas might have heard quarrelled over in his robbers' cave: and truly it is like emerging from some such den into the honest holy light of day, to turn from the earlier to the later series of discussions, and to see how Burke, from 1781 onward, illumined the whole field of debate.†

From the very beginning of these proceedings, he stands forward as the initiator of a policy: "Reform your principle, since it is founded in vice, and productive of calamity. Establish a generous principle in its room, of fair and full and public justice. Show them that you are determined to become the protectors, not the oppressors of the country, that you wish to hold your authority on the solid rock of their happiness. Consider that there are 30 millions of souls involved in this affair" . . . "teach the people that live under you, that it is their interest to be your subjects." That was how he already spoke in 1781; see *Parliamentary History*, April 30th; and the same tone

* It would not be strictly true to say that, in the debates of 1772–3, no reference whatsoever was made to the state of the Indian populations: for Colonel Burgoyne and Sir W. Meredith, in moving for the select committee on Indian affairs, had mentioned the distresses of fifteen millions of people, and Colonel Burgoyne had expressed shame "that the native of Hindustan, an immemorial slave, should first have learnt from British rulers how intolerable the life of a slave might be made": but those references were scarcely more than parenthetical in relation to the real matters of conflict.

† Even as regards Burke himself, there is, at least apparently, a marked contrast between the Burke who in 1772 argued against General Burgoyne's committee, and in 1773 against Lord North's Regulating Bill, and the Burke who in 1783 argued for (and possibly may have planned) the India Bill then before Parliament. In the year 1772–3, when he habitually spoke on the side of the East India Company, he no doubt was acting in concert with the heads of the Rockingham-whig party, who in the House of Lords opposed, and finally protested against, the passing of Lord North's Bill. Whether the Rockingham resistance to Lord North's Indian policy was rooted in any deeper conviction than that the "duty of an opposition is to oppose," needs not here be guessed; but it is certain that Burke, when he took prominent part in that resistance, argued from an infinitely lower level than he afterwards attained. The independent and fruitful growth of his mind dated manifestly from 1781, when he became a member of General Smith's Select Committee. On a subsequent occasion, he incidentally mentioned that he had entered on that committee with a strong bias in favour of Hastings, and was sometimes upbraided for it by others; but that 'the huge volumes of evidence which came under his inspection effected a complete revolution in all his ideas.' *History of Parliament*, July 30, 1784.

resounds in all his subsequent utterances. Very memorably it is to be heard throughout his great speech of Dec. 1, 1783, for going into Committee on the India Bill;* as especially in the parts where he discusses the "chartered rights" of the East India Company. He tells his hearers that no charter of power and monopoly, tending to suspend any "natural rights" of mankind at large, can be valid except as a conditional grant: that every such grant is, in the strictest sense, a *trust:* that it is of the very essence of a trust to be rendered accountable, and even totally to cease when it substantially varies from the purposes for which it alone could have a lawful existence: and, for testing whether the East India Company had substantially broken its trust, he states, as his standard, this fundamental principle;—"that all political power which is set over men, and that all privilege claimed or exercised in exclusion of them, being wholly artificial, and for so much a derogation from the natural equality of mankind at large, ought to be, some way or other, exercised ultimately for their benefit." The principles which Burke so advanced had, from old time, been familiar to political philosophers in their studies; and thoughts of like meaning may perhaps have been uttered before in Parliament on occasions when they would be little heeded; but now, when Burke, assuming those principles to be universal, invoked them as his criterion of the duty owing from Britain to India, a notable moment had come in British politics, an eventful moment for many millions of the human race.†

* In this speech of Burke's, and in his subsequent speech on the subject of the Nabob of Arcot's debts, the chief acts of British administration in India, from the time of Warren Hastings's succession to power, were elaborately examined; the many huge wrongs of oppression and perfidy which had been practised for gain were exposed and stigmatised; and above all, the cruel sufferings which had been brought on masses of population by the Rohilcund and Carnatic wars were represented in such terms of pathos, and with such burning indignation against the authors of the misery, that, even as mere eloquence, the speeches are of classical interest.

† Later in the same debate, Fox uttered his vehement assertion of the same principles: "What is the end of all government? certainly the happiness of the governed. Others may hold their opinions, but this is mine, and I proclaim it. What are we to think of a government whose good fortune is supposed to spring from the calamities of its subjects, whose aggrandisement grows out of the miseries of mankind? This is the kind of government exercised by the East India Company on the natives of Indostan, and the subversion of that infamou government is the main object of the Bill in question."

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When Burke, in the last year of his life, was rendering account of all he had done or tried to do in the public service, he named his endeavours for India as the labours on which he valued himself the most;* and it would probably have seemed to him that the climax of those long persistent endeavours was reached, and, in a certain sense, their best success achieved, when the House of Commons had been led by him to decree the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and when he stood as chief spokesman for the House on that great historical occasion. On February 13, 1788, the late holder of almost vice-regal office was on trial before the supreme judicial court of Great Britain in respect of abuses charged against him; not that he had taken British life or property, or had broken law as commonly applied within the four seas of our home-dominion; but that, half way across the globe of the earth, he had been an oppressor of other people than our own. To us, who from a hundred years afterwards, look back to the conditions under which that State-trial was held, it must appear the merest matter of course that the legal procedure failed. The merely technical difficulties in its way seem to have been little short of insuperable; difficulties equally great lay in the political relations of the case; and so far as the verdict would be decided by party-voting, of course the managers of the impeachment could never have had the shadow of a chance.† It can hardly be imagined that, even in 1788, the warmest approvers of the impeachment expected to attain a formal success; and the verdict of acquittal, which Hastings, after more than seven years obtained, was such as might have been predicted from the first.‡ On the other

* Letter to a noble Lord, 1796.

† See previous footnote, page 146.

‡ In contrast to the highly spectacular opening of the great trial in 1788, was the almost unnoticed falling of the curtain on the 23rd of April, 1795. Of some four hundred existing peers, twenty-nine took part in the final votes, and they voted, at least five to one, for the articles of acquittal. This exoneration, as regards its substance, may be compared with the vote which the House of Commons, twenty-two years before, had passed on the subject of the charges against Lord Clive. On that occasion, in order to practically exonerate Clive, the voters, while recording that he had acted illegally, declared that he had at the same time rendered great and meritorious services to his country; but in 1795, the Peers in judgment could not by any such vote evade the simple *Yes* or *No* of the criminal charge, and, as between those enforced alternatives, the *Yes* was politically impossible. Hastings, whatever wrongs he had done, had on the whole

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hand, from the standpoint of these later times, it is easy enough to see that, not the verdict, not the question whether the proceedings should bear penal fruit, but the fact of the impeachment in itself, was the matter which concerned the world, and that the moral significance of the impeachment was immense. It was proclamation to the world that the impeaching authority, the Commons of Great Britain, regarded as highly criminal, and as reflecting dishonour on this country, the sorts of action which the articles of impeachment described; it was virtual pledge that the impeaching authority would thenceforth guard the people of India against any repetition of such wrongs; and to the administrators of the India Act of 1784, it was emphatic warning as to the standards of right and wrong by which the House of Commons would judge all future government of India. So far as the councils of a nation may be expected to show continuity of moral purpose, the impeachment of Hastings promised future submission to the principles which Burke had held aloft in 1781, as those on which India should be governed; and Indian records of the last hundred years contain evidence enough, that Britain, throughout this new era, has faithfully endeavoured to act in the spirit of that implied promise.

Negro-slavery: the Quakers and Wilberforce.

At about the same time with the increased discussions of Indian affairs, a third great question of humanity began to attract public attention in England: the question which is identified above all with the names of GRANVILLE SHARP and THOMAS CLARKSON and WILLIAM WILBERFORCE: the question, whether the British nation should continue to be a slave-trading and slave-owning power. *

greatly enlarged and strengthened the British dominion in India; and the State which meant to accept his acquisitions could hardly condemn him in respect of them.

* Particulars as to the rise and progress of the slavery-discussion in England are above all to be found in Clarkson's *History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, and in the *Life* of Wilberforce, by his Sons. Also in the late Sir James Stephen's *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, the two articles *William Wilberforce* and *The Clapham Sect* contain much information with regard to the chief early abolitionists: specially interesting from the fact that the writer's father, Mr. James Stephen, was connected by marriage with Mr. Wilberforce, and was himself an eminent member of the abolitionist group. My text is entirely founded on those authorities.

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The three philanthropists, just-named, were not the first Englishmen to regard with horror and shame that their country was still tolerant of that old savageness. If none else in the land, at least the Society of Friends, with their steadfast simple morals, and their dignified patience under tyrannies which pressed on themselves, had never refrained from protesting against that great wrong to the brotherhood of mankind: William Penn in 1688 had denounced it as cruel and unchristian; his successors in the Society had uniformly taken the same tone; and in 1760, the Society, going beyond its previous "severe censures," resolved that thenceforth it would disown as members all who in any way participated in the slave-trade. But the Quakers were not a proselytising sect, nor were in any way powerful in the State, and their resolutions against slavery had been of no more effect in England than their harmless peculiarities of costume.

In 1769, Granville Sharp published, in first edition, his *Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery in England*, with remarks on the opinions given in 1729 by the then Attorney- and Solicitor-General: and in 1772, using with extraordinary vigour an opportunity which had arisen for giving effect in a particular case to the principles advocated in his pamphlet, he succeeded in eliciting from the judges of England the memorable (unanimous) appeal-decision, for which his name is so gratefully remembered: that the slave who had reached English soil was no longer any man's chattel.

In 1784, the fact of the participation of England in the slave-trade seems to have been brought into increased notice, as a question of public conscience, by a book published at that time by the Rev. James Ramsay. Originally surgeon of a man-of-war, under Sir Charles Middleton, who afterwards was created Baron Barham, Mr. Ramsay, leaving the navy, and entering the profession of the Church, had for nineteen years been resident at St. Kitt's: after which, having returned to England, and become Vicar of Teston in Kent, he now, by the publication above mentioned made known his West Indian observations of the sufferings of the slaves.* Mr. Ramsay's book is authorita-

* *Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of the African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies:* as quoted in Clarkson's *History*. According to Clarkson, Mr.

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tively said to have "commenced that public controversy which was closed only by the abolition of the trade;" and not least among its effects may certainly be counted its important influence on the minds of those who are next to be mentioned.

In 1785, St. John's College, Cambridge, had, for the subject-matter of its annual prize-competition in Latin essay-writing, the question,—*Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare;* and the prize (like that of the year before on a different question) was won by Thomas Clarkson, then an undergraduate in course of study for the Church. The answer which Clarkson gave to the proposed question—an answer which is said to have been received with much applause when read in the Senate House in 1786, was an elaborate vehement negative; and the researches which Clarkson had made for the purpose of the essay had so filled his mind with a sense of the moral relations of the question, that now, with academical honors, he forthwith set aside his previous plan of life: determining not to take ecclesiastical service, but to accept as his best 'holy orders' that his life should thenceforward be given to work against slavery. Clarkson's essay, which he immediately published in English translation, brought him at once into fellowship with Granville Sharp and a few others (mostly Quakers) who had the same cause at heart; and in 1787 this little group of persons constituted themselves, with Granville Sharp as their Chairman, and Clarkson as their Secretary, an Association for the Abolition of Negro Slavery.

One of the first steps of the associated 'abolitionists' was to come into concert with Mr. Wilberforce; and he, from now onward, became their political leader.* Before the end of 1787,

Ramsay published also in 1784 an *Inquiry into the Effects of the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, and during the five next years (chiefly in answer to attacks made on him) various other writings. In the *Life of Wilberforce* it is said that "through the years 1784 and 1785 Mr. Ramsay fought alone in this holy cause, nor did he quit the strife until he sank under its virulence in the summer of 1789."

* He was now twenty-eight years old, and had been seven years in Parliament. When only a school-boy of fourteen, he had written to his county newspaper in protest against "the odious traffic in human flesh": from 1780, when his parliamentary life began, he had been strongly interested for the West Indian slaves; and this interest was increased in 1783 by communication with Mr. Ramsay, whom Sir C. and Lady Middleton made known to him: before 1786, his interest in the question had led him, he says, "to Africa and the abolition": throughout

he had noted in his journal that the suppression of the slave-trade, and the reformation of manners were the two great objects to which he felt himself religiously bound; and now it was, that, after certain talk with Mr. Pitt 'at the root of an old tree at Holwood'—a talk so eventful that the sylvan scene where it was held has become historical,* he resolved to give notice on a fit occasion in the House of Commons of his intention to bring forward the subject of the slave-trade. On the 9th of May, 1788, not Wilberforce in person (for he was then in dangerous illness) but Mr. Pitt, who according to a promise previously given acted for him in the matter, carried a resolution that the House would consider the slave-trade early in the following session: and, for the meantime, in view of certain shameful facts which had been brought forward by Sir W. Dolben as to a slave-ship then in the Thames, a short Act was passed, which it was hoped might somewhat mitigate the cruelties of the traffic. In 1789 (May 12th) Mr. Wilberforce brought forward, in twelve resolutions, the case for the abolition of the Slave-Trade: the three foremost members of the House, Pitt and Fox and Burke, supported him to their utmost: but "on May 21, after a debate of unusual warmth, the planters succeeded in deferring the decision of the House until counsel had been heard and evidence tendered at the bar."

Now began to be better perceived than before, that a very arduous struggle had been undertaken: a struggle, no doubt, for right as against wrong; but, at the same time, a struggle for the unseen as against the seen,—a struggle for justice to strangers and aliens as against familiar citizens of our own who were amassing wealth by the iniquity,—a struggle for the human rights of creatures whom many were half-declaring to be not human. On the defending side, was an extremely influential mercantile class, with very large pecuniary interests at stake: on the assailing side, chiefly "a few obscure quakers" with other like "fanatics": but now the "fanatics" saw that,

1786, he was busily pursuing his inquiries among the African Merchants, who at that time were not unwilling to inform him,—"the trade not having yet become the subject of alarming discussion": and in 1787, he began to argue the matter with his political friends.

* Some twenty or more years ago, the fifth Earl Stanhope placed at the spot a stone seat with an explanatory inscription.

in order to make their struggle successful, they must appeal to the humanity of the nation at large, and this appeal they proceeded to press with every possible vigor. Most disastrously for all hopes of rapid success, most unhappily for the thousands of human lives which in each single year that passed were being added to the spoils of the infernal traffic, the dilatory tactics by which the slave-traders had successfully opposed Mr. Wilberforce in the House of Commons in the month of May, were soon afterwards rendered immensely more powerful by the outbreak of the French Revolution, and through the political anxieties which, in sequel of that outbreak, began, and for many years continued, to fall heavily on this country. For nineteen years the tactics of the slave-traders, favored by political circumstances, were able to delay the extinction of the trade. In proportion as excesses were committed in the name of the French Revolution, and were held up to British odium, endeavours were made to bring within range of that odium the principles of men who would abolish negro-slavery; and in the days when the governing classes regarded Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* much as a red-rag might be regarded on the hills of Bashan, silly members of Parliament were led to believe that, in order "not to encourage Paine's disciples," they must continue to sanction by their votes the kidnapping and sale of negroes. "This impression, we are told, biassed most strongly the mind of the king, and created henceforth an insuperable obstacle to the exercise of any ministerial influence in behalf of Abolition."* It is painful to remember that even William Pitt, with all his high qualities, and with hatred of the slave-trade perhaps as great as that which his friend Wilberforce had, could yet not dominate those stupid fears of others; and that in this, as in too many other aims of earlier ambition, his genius was frustrated of glories it should have gained. The short-lived Grenville Administration, inspired by the warmer generosity of Fox, faced without fear the difficulties at which Pitt had quailed. On June 10th, 1806, Mr. Fox carried by a majority of 114 to 15 in the House of Commons (and it was the last motion on which he ever spoke there) a resolution condemning the slave-trade, and pledging the House to proceed with all practicable expedition

* *Life*, p. 103.

to abolish it: and soon afterwards, on Lord Grenville's motion, the Lords concurred in that resolution.* In 1807, in pursuance of those votes, an Abolition Bill was introduced and carried. Though to the last the royal family remained irreconcilable, and though two of the princes, "speaking, as it was understood, the sentiments of all the reigning family," declared openly against the Bill, and canvassed against it, Lord Grenville induced the Lords to pass the Bill by a large majority. In the Commons—where now unhappily Fox's voice could no longer be raised in its favour, for his life had ended in the autumn, Lord Howick (afterwards the Earl Grey of the Reform Act of 1832) introduced the Bill, and carried its second reading by a majority of 283 to 16. The Bill in its further progress was not opposed: and on the 25th of March (in spite of the change of ministry which was then occurring) it received the royal assent. †

Twenty years had elapsed since the abolitionists began their associated labours; twenty years during which those labours had never remitted; and now, at the passing of the Act, those who had won that victory felt the Act to be their supreme reward. But, in truth, the mere legislative measure was but a fragment of the success they had achieved. With their long persistent agitation of the question, with debates on it again and again in both Houses of Parliament, with propagandism in all parts of the country, with innumerable local organisations created into sympathy with them, they had conduced, in extraordinary measure, to the higher political education of their country. Clarkson, in concluding his *History of the Abolition*, rightly claims for them the praise of what they had done in that respect. Insistence on common humanity in politics was the wedge which for twenty years they had been pressing home. Some recognition of this expressed itself in the House of Commons at the memorable second reading of the Bill: when the Grenville Solicitor-General Sir Samuel Romilly (of whose own humane labors in a different field something will hereafter have to be said) made, in the course of his speech for the Bill, an appro-

* Clarkson's History gives a convenient compendium of the debates, and contains some touching particulars of Fox's last acts and thoughts in relation to the movement.

† *Life*, chapter xvi.

priate personal reference to Wilberforce: * "whereupon the whole House, surprised into a forgetfulness of its ordinary habits, burst forth into acclamations of applause." † Of the success with which the abolitionists had pleaded their cause, and had gained the conscience of the country to their side, more enduring illustrations were subsequently given by the progress of events.

First, from the time when England renounced the slave-trade, the successive governments of the country exerted their influence with the governments of other civilised countries to obtain general adhesion to the same policy, and those endeavours have had wide effect. Thus in 1814, the restored Bourbon government of France was induced to agree with the British Government (under a separate article of the Treaty of Paris) that at the approaching Congress of Vienna, they would unite their efforts to induce all the powers of Christendom to proclaim the universal and absolute abolition of the trade: in 1815, during the hundred days of Buonaparte's regained ascendency, proclamation was made of the total and immediate abolition of all French slave-trade, and, on the return of Louis XVIII., that abolition was confirmed: while at Vienna the members of the Congress declared "in the face of Europe" that their respective governments were animated with a sincere desire to concur in the most prompt and effectual action to a like effect. And since that time, in result of exertions made by this country, or in avowed sympathy with it, nearly all the civilised powers of the world have passed laws prohibiting the traffic, or have entered into treaties which declare intention to do so.

And secondly, in 1833, the triumph of the "few obscure quakers" was consummated by one of the greatest facts in history. Till then, though trading in slaves had for twenty-seven years been suppressed in all British dominions, the holding of slaves had not been prohibited, and slaves were still

* "He entreated the young members of Parliament to let this day's event be a lesson to them, how much the rewards of virtue exceeded those of ambition; and then contrasted the feelings of the Emperor of the French, in all his greatness, with those of that honoured man, who would this day, returning to his private roof, and receiving the congratulations of his friends, lay his head upon his pillow, and remember that the slave trade was no more."

† *Life*, p. 279.

held in the British colonies. To the everlasting honour of that generation, and of the men who had heightened its standards of right and wrong, the British people of 1833 would no longer bear that shame on its conscience: it taxed itself twenty millions of pounds to buy for those others the freedom which had been its own heritage, and the Legislature of the United Kingdom, voting the required ransom money, decreed the Emancipation of the Colonial Slaves.

Obstructive alarms.

The success of the Grenville administration, in passing in 1807 after a struggle of twenty years the Act which abolished British slave-trading, had been the happy accident of a particular political interlude. With that splendid exception, the thirty years which succeeded the outbreak of the French Revolution were years of almost no legislative progress in this country; and during most of the time any proposal to amend a bad law was likely to be met with contumely. The French revolutionary excesses, though in great part caused or aggravated by the interference of external powers, had induced in England a terror of reform equal to the Parisian terror of the guillotine: and the English terror, which affected very powerfully a vast number of the minds of that generation, especially of the governing and opulent classes, and which perhaps never afterwards quite died out of the minds it had once possessed, got an illogical increase of strength, during the Napoleonic wars and the years next after them, in proportion as our own malcontents, suffering from the hard conditions of the times, complained that all reasonable domestic reforms were withheld from them. During that period, many men who had previously professed liberal opinions (perhaps not always with deliberation and disinterestedness) made recantation, and often more than recantation, of their liberalism; even those who had been sincerest in their liberality, could not all keep cool heads, and retain their old convictions unchanged; and among men who stood firm amid the stampede of former comrades, few could dream it a fitting time to bring forward any project of reform.

Criminal Law: Romilly and Mackintosh.

Yet, even in that unpromising time, new ground was broken in one highly important field of humane intention. Endeavours,

namely, were then made, to bring the Criminal Law of the country under fresh legislative consideration: endeavours especially as to those parts of the law which regulated the punishment of offences, and which at that time were indiscriminately extreme in their threats; often shamefully cruel so far as the threats were fulfilled, and often ridiculously futile so far as they were not. One of the greatest of English judges had two centuries before observed, and the present common-sense of mankind accepts the observation as just, that "too severe laws are never duly executed": yet here, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, nearly three hundred crimes, differing immensely from each other in their degrees of moral and social importance, were all equally punishable with death. In the endeavours which were made to obtain reasonable amendments in the statutory scale of punishment for crime (as also in other important endeavours for law-reform) the leader of the forlorn hope was Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY, and his endeavours were almost invariably defeated. He certainly did in 1808 succeed in procuring from the Legislature, that pickpockets should no longer be sentenced to death; but in 1810, when he tried to move a little farther in the same direction, he could not induce Parliament to withdraw the extreme penalty from persons who did shop-lifting to the amount of five shillings; and further attainment of the reforms he advocated was not to be during his lifetime. Deplorable for many interests was the abrupt ending of his life in 1818; and rarely as it can be that the death of a man in his sixty-second year awakens the kind of feeling with which the premature extinction of high youthful promise is regarded, something of that kind of feeling—something of the emotion with which the shaded figure of the young Marcellus was seen by him who told its story, is hardly not to be felt by those who read of the life and death of Romilly. *Ostendunt terris hunc tantum fata.* The peculiar homage with which his contemporaries regarded him, and the impressions as to him which may be gathered from his own very interesting journals, combine to suggest a personality of the highest worth:*

* See for instance, in the *Memoirs of Sir James Mackintosh* (vol. i. p. 34) how Mackintosh, writing of Romilly as early as 1810, refers to his moral character as standing "higher than that of any other conspicuous Englishman now alive." Or see, in the third volume of Lord Brougham's collected *Speeches*,

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a man of deeply-conscientious tender nature, of truest integrity, of high intellectual gifts, of indefatigable industry for the aims of duty, of generous ambition to do good to mankind: and it is sad to think of the sudden broken-hearted end of a life, which just before was so full of vigor and benevolence, so strenuous in the hard struggles of the time. In spite of the influence which his character and abilities gave him, and in spite of the strength of the cause he was pleading, he, during the last ten years of his life, had been unable to procure any single mitigation of the penal code: and on July 4th, 1818, on his election for Westminster, when making what proved to be his last, as it was also his first, address to that new constituency, he truly stated—"I have indeed endeavoured to be useful to the public, but my endeavours have seldom been successful." After his death, however, the cause for which he had been contending was not allowed to fall into oblivion. In 1819, it was taken up afresh by Sir James Mackintosh, who with better fortune and perhaps better strategy than had previously been used (but with Government still strongly opposing) succeeded in inducing the House of Commons to refer to a Select Committee the whole subject of the extreme punishments; and the report of this Committee was in favour of abolishing capital punishment for all except a small proportion of the offences which had previously been subject to it. Early in 1820, Mackintosh introduced six Bills to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee; and, in spite of the continued opposition of Government, got three of the six passed—1st of Geo. IV., capp. 115, 116, 117: among them a repeal of the previous capital punishment for small shop-liftings. In 1821, he made a second attempt with one of the lost bills of

where several pages are given to the praise of Romilly, how Brougham (1838) says of him:—"Few persons have ever attained celebrity of name and exalted station in any country, or in any age, with such unsullied purity of character as this equally excellent and eminent person. . . . No one could know Romilly, and doubt that, as he only valued his own success and his own powers in the belief that they might conduce to the good of mankind, so each augmentation of his authority, each step of his progress, must have been attended with some triumph in the cause of humanity and justice. . . It was the confession of all who were admitted to his private society, that they forgot the lawyer, the orator, and the patriot, and had never been aware, while gazing on him with admiration, how much more he really deserved that tribute than he seemed to do when seen from afar."

the previous year—a bill to mitigate the law as to forgery, but was again defeated. In 1822, in spite of the law officers of the crown, he procured from the House an engagement that the remaining matter should be considered in the next session; but in 1823, when, in view of that engagement, he submitted resolutions for the proposed amendments of the law, Mr. Peel (who had recently become home-secretary) defeated him by moving the previous question. Peel however now saw fit to adopt certain of the resolutions as basis for action by Government; and by three bills of his, which of course were carried—4th Geo. IV. cc. 46, 53 and 54, "about a hundred" different offences were relieved from the penalty of death.*

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Rush of final successes.

It might have soothed the shade of Romilly to know that this tardy concession to his pleadings for humanity and common-sense was inaugural of other great changes. It was the beginning of a thaw in that omnipotent "cold obstruction" which, for the past third part of a century, had immobilised so many different efforts for reform. The single first ship, though with its early commander dead, had made way through the breaking ice; and now, one by one, with less and less delay, others of the frost-bound squadron were to grind through. Thus, in 1824 was passed (but it had to be re-enacted with amendments in 1826) an Act repealing the long series of statutes, from the reign of Edward III. downwards, under which rates of wages and hours of labor had been subject to regulation by magistrates, and under which it had been unlawful for workmen to take combined action, however peaceful, on questions they might have with their employers as to work or wage. In 1828, came the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. In 1829, the Catholic Relief Act followed. In 1832, was passed the Parliamentary Reform Act. In 1833, was passed (as before mentioned) the Colonial Slavery Abolition Act. In 1834—to remedy certain extreme abuses which had been admitted into the working of the Elizabethan law for the relief of the poor, and by which the aims of that humane institution, and even the solvency of the country, were urgently endangered, the Poor Law Amendment

* For the number of the exemptions, I quote Mr. Walpole's *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 74.

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Act was passed. In 1835, this series of reform was completed by the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act.

Summary.

As, in the last chapter, there was traced, down to the end of the reign of William the Fourth, the growth of the technical knowledge with which this narrative is concerned, so, in the present chapter, it has been endeavoured to trace down to the same date the growth of that larger mind by which the technical knowledge claims to be appreciated: a growth, which, during the period spoken of, was such as had never before been known.

At the present date, when the line of that particular progress has been prolonged half a century further, and has so become even more plainly defined, every one can see that, before this nineteenth century began, a powerful new momentum had come to operate in politics; and that the Parliaments of George IV. and William IV., legislating at length in obedience to that impulse, practically affirmed new social theories, and took irrevocable first steps towards a far-reaching political future. Underlying the legislative acts, and giving them an unity of their own, was a spirit so changed from that of the old times as virtually to be the adoption of new standards of weight and measure in politics. An increased consideration for the units of mankind, a developed apprehension of the meaning of social justice, a widened consciousness of the range of social duty, were prominent characteristics of the new time. Society had become readier than before to hear individual voices which told of pain or asked for redress of wrong; abler than before to admit that justice does not weight her balances in relation to the ranks, or creeds, or colours, or nationalities of men; apter than before to perceive that the just balances which serve between man and man may, in principle, serve between nation and nation. Reasonable politicians had begun to recognise other tests of political success than those which had satisfied earlier times. The so-called "masses" of mankind had come to be of interest in other points of view than those of the recruiting-serjeant and the tax-gatherer. Philosophers were seeming to say, that the "mass" which has in it most human worth and welfare is that which best justifies the system of government which is over it. Our own "mass" was growing responsive to that suggestion. The

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component units were rapidly learning to aspire. And statesmen could not but acknowledge that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is at least a good security for social quiet. As a force of construction in the world, the new spirit was in direct contrast to that which after Roman times had created the feudal institutions; it was the first strongly organised influence which had arisen since the decline of feudalism: and in spite of lapsed centuries, it found survivals enough of feudal thought, and remnants enough of feudal construction, to shew how essentially opposed to them it was, and how true a crisis was reached in English history when at last it could give legislative effect to its own principles. The democratising parts of the new legislation were those on which the flagbearers and trumpeters of rival political parties would chiefly have spent their praise or dispraise: but those parts taken by themselves (highly significant parts though no doubt they were) did not fully represent the essential spirit of the time: nor can that spirit be characterised in full by any narrower praise-word than the word Humane.

In the development of that spirit, and of the religious and political currents from which it rose, logical influences had been of less wide effect than the very extensive influences of feeling; and any movement so largely emotional would naturally show some sallies of unwisdom. Thoughts which can sustain the steady lifelong work of strongly constituted minds will intoxicate others into excess; and always, too, on occasions when the popular mind is really moved, vain foolish persons are apt to press themselves disproportionately to the front with officiousness and tiresome fuss. It may be admitted, and needs not be wondered at, that, from circumstances such as those, the good cause which we have followed in its progress had occasional moments of disadvantage; moments of exaggeration, of one-sidedness, of clamour, of vanity: moments which vexed the common-sense of sober men, and required and received correction.* It would now be idle to

* Thus there were demagogue and libertine "friends of humanity" whom it was well for Canning and Frere to ridicule in the witty skits of the *Anti-Jacobin*; and there were sectarian conceits and pretensions, which needed the kindly chastisement of Sydney Smith's wisdom and humour. Even in much later times, certain types of well-meaning silliness have been usefully reminded by Dickens and Thackeray, that Mrs. Jellyby's own home would be the better for some of the exertions she devotes to the settlement of Borrioboola-Gha; that the

insist on those occasional extravagances and errors, the mere accidents of an advancing development. In the currents of moral progress, just as in many a physical riverflow, the early rapids have features of their own. Just as the young river spends some of its headlong force in tumult and echo, in waves which recoil where they strike, and in foam which is but for the sunshine to sport with, so the great quickening-times of human history have speech and action which run to waste. At certain moments, beheld from certain standpoints, the marginal extravagance seems the whole life of the scene, but with an interval it becomes as if it had never been. As the rainbowed spray of the Schaffhausen cataract, the breakers and eddies of Lauffenburg and Rheinfelden, are of no record on the broad calm river which sweeps past Niederwald and Drachenfels to sea, thus it is with their analogues in human history. Regarded by successive generations from longer and longer distance, they become less and less significant in the field of thought; while, conversely, the massive current of the great time, the "one increasing purpose" which has been its true life, comes more and more grandly into view.

That, of the hundred years to which the present chapter has related, the pervading character, the one current of "increasing purpose," was the constantly advancing influence of common humanity in politics, is what the chapter has endeavoured to make manifest; and the fact of that advance has had to be here specially dwelt upon, because, without it, the popular mind might, for ever so long, have omitted to appreciate and utilise the new teachings which Medical Science had become able to supply. The influence exercised by the New Humanity in promoting the rise of modern State-Medicine in England, is, of its many great influences, the only one on which the present narrative is entitled to insist; but, passing for the moment beyond that limit, the writer permits himself a word of more general homage to the progress of the hundred years. He believes that the period in its entirety deserves to be counted among the greatest in English history. In the cultivation

obstreperous blast of Mrs. Pardiggle's visit to the poor is of less comfort to them than the winter's wind; and that Lady Southdown's tracts and physic are unsuited to the case of Mrs. Rawdon Crawley.

which it gave to a sense of moral responsibility in national affairs,—in the splendid instances which it showed of the applicability of common ethical argument to politics,—in the appeals which it made to the consciences of rulers and nations against courses of selfish wrong,—in the feeling which it propagated, that nations, like persons, if they would not be ashamed of themselves, must obey, at home and abroad, the common rules of equal justice,—not least in the mutual understanding which it promoted between the social instincts and the political philosophy of mankind,—it represented such strides of civil culture as no former age of our country had seen: strides of a far truer civilisation than any which widened empire, or enhanced luxuries of life, can pretend to show. By its transcendent merits in those respects, a new political world was opened to the view; and for inheritors who were worthy of it, there began the era which the Author of the *Areopagitica* had foretold as to come from Freedom: that era which he, master-patriot and master-poet, failing in physical sight, but "with inward eyes illuminated," had discerned across the dark mean times then next to come: the brighter and better distance, when the England he loved and taught should be "as an eagle muing her mighty youth."

CHAPTER IX.

FIRST EXPERIENCES OF ASIATIC CHOLERA IN EUROPE.

THE last two chapters have been intended to trace, down to times immediately preceding the present reign, first, how, from early in last century, there had been an accumulating rise of new scientific knowledge as to the causes and preventabilities of different sorts of disease; and, secondly, how, during the same period, the country, under various new teachings, had immensely advanced in the principles and practice of politics, and had virtually begun a new national life with widely altered conceptions of political good and evil. The social value of the new knowledge which medical men had gathered as to the preventability of certain sorts of disease would surely not long fail to be appreciated in the higher civilisation which had dawned; but, within the reign of William the Fourth, hardly a commencement of such appreciation was to be traced. The new knowledge had been chiefly developed in those varieties of enterprise in which definite quantities of human life happen to be of immediate instrumental value; as especially in great military and naval undertakings, wherein such quantities are indispensable means to proposed ends. In such directions, the necessity of economising the human tools had always so clearly been a requisite for success, that great generals, even in ancient times, had exercised some sanitary shrewdness in saving their legions from the irregular foe; and it was from our own army and navy of the new times, that practical lessons in the scientific prevention of disease had chiefly come. But, in the common civil world, question had hardly yet arisen, whether economies in the expenditure of human life could be made.

State of Public Health Government under William IV.

Thus, in 1830, when William the Fourth began his reign, and equally in 1837 when the reign ended, the new knowledge was virtually unrecognised by the Legislature. The Statute-Book contained no general law of sanitary intention, except (so far as this

deserves to be counted an exception) the Act providing for Quarantine: under which well-intentioned but futile Act, the Lords of the Council were supposed to be always on the look-out for transmarine dangers of pestilence, and could make pretence of resisting such dangers. Against smallpox, Parliament used annually to vote £2,000 to support a National Vaccine Board which had a few vaccinating-stations in London, and furnished the public with vaccine lymph. Outside those two matters, the Central Government had nothing to say in regard to the Public Health, and Local Authorities had but the most indefinite relation to it. Various important towns had their special Improvement-Acts for certain purposes: but among the purposes, Health had hardly yet begun to stand on its own merits. The Commissions of Sewers which from long ago had been empowered to defend their respective districts against flood from sea or river, were institutions which, no doubt, so far as they kept their districts dry, conduced to the healthiness of England. But those Commissions had never been intended to deal with problems of filth-removal: problems, which, as we now know, and especially where towns are in question, complicate to the utmost the problem of mere land-drainage. Almost nowhere had any competent engineering skill been brought to bear on the sewerage of towns; and town-sewers, retaining large proportions of whatever solid filth passed into them, and often letting more liquid sewage escape into surrounding soil and house-basements than they transmitted to their proper outfall, were among the worst of nuisances to the neighbourhoods which they pretended to relieve. No doubt there existed in each town more or less of pavement, more or less of sewering, more or less of public water-supply: but in each of those respects the standard of quantity and quality did not pretend to be a sanitary standard. The local question would commonly have been, what is the least amount of local improvement which will suffice to avert intolerable degrees of common physical inconvenience; and probably very few of our towns, in their answering of that question, recognised nearly as high a standard of requirement as had been recognised, two thousand years before, in Rome. As to the refuse of private premises, the house-holder stored his filth as he liked, or got rid of it as he could. From early in the century, water-closets (such as they were) had begun to be used in the

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better houses; but almost all houses had cess-pools—commonly cess-pools which both leaked and stank; and, in towns, a cess-pool of that sort would generally be in the basement of the house. Nuisances injurious to health abounded everywhere; and against such nuisances, however flagrant, there was no sort of summary jurisdiction. No general law existed as to the practice of the medical profession, or as to the sale of drugs or poisons; and except for the purposes of excise, there was no available law against adulterations of food.

Asiatic Cholera in Europe and in the United Kingdom.

This was the state of things when the reign of William the Fourth began, and equally was the state when his reign ended. But the reign, though it produced no sanitary reform of its own, was, in two senses, an important preparatory period in relation to the years which next followed: first, because of its unprecedented activity in other lines of reform which have been mentioned; and secondly, because the seven years of the reign corresponded pretty exactly with the period of the earliest prevalence of ASIATIC CHOLERA IN EUROPE.

It needs not be said that the first prevalence of Cholera in Europe gave occasion to immense alarm. During two years, dating from the autumn of 1831, outbreaks of the disease, some of them very severe, were occurring in various parts of the United Kingdom, and the popular fears which they excited were such as had not been in the country since the days of the Great Plague.

The story of that invasion is but very imperfectly known. We know that our first-invaded town was Sunderland, attacked in the autumn of 1831; that soon afterwards the disease was spreading in Scotland; that in February it reached London, and in a little while extended to Ireland; that during great part of 1832 it was widely diffused in the United Kingdom; and that our last-known (few) cases were in the summer of 1833. How many deaths it caused, can not be accurately told; for in those days there was not yet any general registry of deaths in the United Kingdom; but from such returns—"voluntary, partial, and evidently defective," as were obtained, it seems that certain named places in Great Britain, with fewer than five and a quarter millions of aggregate population, suffered 31,376 deaths, and

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that in Ireland the deaths were 21,171.* Of the measures by which the disease was resisted in the various attacked localities, no general record exists; but the successive *London Gazettes* of the time record the chief proceedings of the Central Government in the matter, and enable this part of the story to be read with tolerable completeness.

Action taken by the British Government.

Early in 1831, when the danger of the approaching infection began to strike the public mind, the British Government sent two Medical Commissioners, Doctors William Russell and David Barry, to St. Petersburg, to study the disease; and later in the year, the report, made by these commissioners on their return, was published for general information. In June (by which time the disease had attacked Riga and Dantzig) the superintendent-general of Quarantine, Sir William Pym, moved the Privy Council for more decided measures against the introduction of the disease into the United Kingdom: whereupon a special Order in Council was forthwith passed, to make Cholera subject to precautionary rules under the Quarantine Act, such as had from long before been applicable against Levantine Plague; and the Privy Council, as Sir W. Pym had suggested, entered into consultation with the Royal College of Physicians on the subject of precautions. Soon afterwards (June 20) a Royal Proclamation notified to the public the state of the case, and announced the establishment of a consultative Board of Health. This Board, in conformity with a precedent which had been set "on the occasion of the Gibraltar sickness in 1805," was made to consist of the President and four other fellows of the College of Physicians, the Superintendent-General of Quarantine, the Director-General of the Army Medical Department, the Medical Commissioner of the Victualling Office, and two non-medical civil servants—namely, the Comptroller of the the Navy and the Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Customs, together with a paid medical secretary: three members, with at least two of them medical, to be a quorum: and the Board took for its President Sir Henry Halford, who was then President of the College of Physicians. Four months later (Oct. 20) the

* See Dr. Farr's statements on the matter, at page xlv. of his *Report on the Cholera Mortality in England*, 1848-9.

Lords of the Council had before them certain *Rules and Regulations* proposed by the Board "for the purpose of preventing the introduction and spreading of the disease," and these, "with a view that all persons may be acquainted therewith and conform themselves thereto," their Lordships caused to be gazetted and circulated. Medically, the *Rules and Regulations* did not represent any advance on what might have been advised in 1720 by Dr. Mead. The disease was declared to be of special affinity for the poor, ill-fed, unhealthy parts of the population, especially those who are of drunken irregular life, and for districts which are unclean, ill-ventilated and crowded; and the Board trusted that the mitigation of those evils would be promoted by the most active endeavours of persons of influence. For what remained, rigorous quarantine was the supreme hope: and, as Government could only control the regular channels of trade or passage, all persons of influence resident on the coast (and particularly of retired villages along the sea-shore) were to impress on the local populations the dangers of illicit intercourse with smugglers and other such evaders of quarantine. Should the disease effect a landing in the kingdom, local Boards of Health should be established everywhere, consisting of the magistrates, two or more medical practitioners, the clergy of the parish, and three or more principal inhabitants, and in large towns each Board should have district committees of two or three members, including one medical. Separation of sick and healthy was to be the chief care. Hospitals were to be provided, and into them so far as families would consent, the sick were to be removed. Houses containing or having recently contained cases of the disease, were to have conspicuous marks, "*Sick*" or "*Caution*," affixed to them; and their inhabitants were not to be at liberty to move out, or communicate with other persons, until by the authority of the local Board the mark had been removed. Articles of food and other necessaries should be placed in front of the houses to be taken in when the bringer had retired. The houses and their furniture were to be thoroughly cleansed and purified, and left open to fresh air for at least a week. Extreme cleanliness and free ventilation were recommended as of the utmost importance not only for sick houses, but for houses in general. The dead should be buried in some

detached ground near the cholera hospital. Convalescents from the disease, and those who have had any communication with them, should be kept under observation for a period not less than twenty days. All intercourse with any infected town, and the neighbouring country, must be prevented by the best means within the power of the Magistrates: who in extreme cases would have to make regulations for the supply of provisions: and if the disease should show itself in this country in "the terrific way" in which it had appeared in various parts of Europe, it might "become necessary to draw troops, or a strong body of police, around infected places, so as utterly to exclude the inhabitants from all intercourse with the country."

Central and Local Boards for action against Cholera.

Thus far, on October 20th the Board of Health; and on November 2nd the King in Council ordered a Form of Prayer against the Disease. The Board which framed the *Rules and Regulations* had perhaps not been meant to continue: at any rate, it ceased soon after having submitted its proposals: and the *Gazette* of Nov. 14 announced the appointment of a new Central Board of Health: having for its Chairman the Hon. Edward R. Stewart, Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Customs, and, as its other members, the Superintendent-general of Quarantine, the two Medical Commissioners who had just returned from St. Petersburg, and two military officers; with Mr. William Maclean, as Secretary.

Central Advice and Orders.

This Board seems to have worked with creditable activity, and with as much science as was then to be had. In a first circular, issued on November 14, as to the precautionary measures, public and personal, which it recommended to be taken, it distinctly renounced the policy of the previous Board as to coercive restrictions of intercourse with infected or suspected persons or places: declaring that measures of coercion, when tried upon the Continent, had "invariably been productive of evil"; and professing itself confident, "that good sense and good feeling will not only point out, but morally establish, as far as may be practicable, the necessity of avoiding such communication as may endanger the lives of thousands." Alleging, moreover, that "under proper observances of cleanliness and ventilation" cholera "seldom spreads in families, and rarely passes to those about the sick, under such favourable circumstances, unless they happen to be

particularly predisposed," the Board limited to particular classes of cases, disadvantageously circumstanced, the advice which the former Board had given as to the separation of members of affected families, and the insulation of affected houses. It advised that the subordinate Boards of Health, which in each large town were to be constituted under a principal local Board for precautionary purposes, should be charged with the following duties: "(1) to appoint Inspectors: each inspector to visit daily, and to inquire carefully after the health, and comforts of the inmates of, say, 100 houses, more or less, according to circumstances;—(2) to receive and examine the Reports of these Inspectors, which should be made up to a given hour on each day;—(3) to endeavour to remedy, by every means which individual and public charitable exertion can supply, such deficiency as may be found to exist in their respective districts in the following primary elements of public health: viz., the food of the poor, clothing, bedding, ventilation, space, cleanliness, outlets for domestic filth, habits of temperance, prevention of panic;—and (4) to report to their principal Boards respectively on the above heads, as well as on the actual State of Health of their districts." The circular also contained some sensible advice as to medical and dietetic precautions. In a next circular (Dec. 13) the Board issued "*Sanitary Instructions for Communities, supposed to be Actually Attacked by Spasmodic Cholera*," with "*Observations on the Nature and Treatment of the Disease*, drawn up by Doctors Russell and Barry." And in a third circular (Jan. 16) it sought to promote more detailed studies of the hitherto unfamiliar disease, by suggesting a variety of pathological points to be observed by medical practitioners who might have opportunity. Soon afterwards (Jan. 25, 1832) the Board addressed a special Circular to the authorities of the metropolis: saying that "in defiance of winter" cholera had continued to spread in the north of the Kingdom, where it was then threatening Edinburgh, and that, as warmer weather would favour its propagation, the Board deemed it essential that each parish and district of London and its suburbs should without delay prepare itself, in respect of hospital-accommodation and hospital-service, for the possibility of a sudden epidemic outbreak. About this time also (moved by medical consideration which will be

mentioned later on) the Board began to recommend for general circulation in infected districts a particular form of warning handbill: see *Cholera Gazette* of Jan. 28th: to the effect that in attacked districts, persons who would escape cholera must give immediate serious attention to any looseness of bowels which might affect them. Before the middle of February, Cholera had begun to show itself in the eastern riverside parts of London; whereupon the Central Board, appointing Medical Superintendents to act for the Metropolitan Districts, addressed to these officers (Feb. 14) a letter of Instructions as to their duties, and as to the sense in which they should advise the local boards and others: particularly as to the establishment of temporary hospitals and dispensaries, and suitable means for conveyance of the sick, and as to the inmates of prisons and workhouses, and as to the burial of the dead. Each superintendent was to reside within his district, and be a member of its local Board; was to collect from medical practitioners daily returns of all cases of cholera under treatment; and was to report daily to the Central Board all important occurrences. A somewhat later general circular (March 20) prescribed the forms of return in which medical practitioners should report their cholera cases and cholera deaths to Local Boards, and those in which Local Boards should report to the Central Board. On the 19th of August (when probably the disease may have been at its maximum in England) the previous sanitary circulars were re-issued in a consolidated form with some alterations and additions; and a fortnight later (in what seems to have been a last circular) the Board, "being anxious to obtain from authentic practical sources short outlines of the different plans of treatment in cholera which may have been considered most successful," begged of the medical members of Local Boards, and of other medical practitioners who might have had extensive practice in the disease, that they would forward information as to any particular success they had had in their respective modes of treating the different stages of cholera.

Temporary Acts of Parliament: Action by Local Boards.

The advice which the Central Board gave in its circulars was of no binding effect on the public; nor had the Board any authority to do more than advise; but, in relation to some of the purposes which had been indicated in the Board's first

Circular, Government, on the strength of certain "unforeseen emergency" provisions in the Quarantine Act, followed the issue of that circular by issuing (Nov. 21) two Orders of Council expressed in terms of command: the one, requiring that, in all such places as the Privy Council might from time to time by subsequent orders name, Local Boards of Health, with constitution and duties to be regulated by the respective orders, should be established, and that in each such place every medical practitioner should send to the Local Board a daily report of all cholera-cases attended by him: and the other requiring that, in all places having Boards of Health, the Justices of the Peace should, on certain shewings, call upon the poor-law parochial authorities to abate or remove existing Public Nuisances injurious or likely to be injurious to health. Question having soon been raised whether these orders were of any more legal force than the admonitory circulars which had preceded them, and such doubts having accumulated, Government, as soon as Parliament met, obtained the passing of three temporary Acts (2nd Will. IV., cc. ix.–xi.) to establish beyond doubt competent regulative powers for the required purposes in each division of the United Kingdom; and under these Acts, various orders *de novo* were issued:—one (Feb. 29) requiring medical practitioners to make daily returns of all cases recoveries and deaths, in their respective practices; another (March 6) prescribing local-option conditions under which it should be lawful for the Boards of affected districts to provide, chargeably on the poor-rates, temporary hospitals for the sick, and houses of observation for those whom it might be proper to remove from dangers of infection; also a third (July 20) which on like conditions gave local powers for nuisances-removal and the expenses thereof. That the sanitary advice which the Central Board of Health had previously given was greatly strengthened in moral influence when express law came to speak on the same side, may be assumed; but whether the law was in other respects of much effect, whether it coerced many people to do more than they were independently willing to do, may be doubted. For a main difficulty of the position was that, in the years 1831–3, the local communities of the United Kingdom were in general not yet educated or organised or officered up to the level of the emergency which had to be met; and not

even Acts of Parliament can extemporise the intelligence and vigor and public spirit which compensate for defects of law. No doubt there were districts in which all possible exertion was made: notably this seems to have been the case in the City of London, and in the town of Birmingham: but it may be believed that, in most cases, the local apparatus would hardly have been got into working order till the tide for which it was needed had begun to ebb; and that all the best local results were substantially due to unforced individual exertions.

Lessons of the Epidemic.

For the purpose of this narrative, the interest of the cholera-period of 1831–3 lies chiefly in the circumstance, that, during the alarm, many intelligent persons throughout the United Kingdom had occasion to become more critically cognisant than they had ever before been of the sanitary conditions under which the mass of the people was living; but no exact knowledge was gained as to the bearing of any particular condition on the spread of the disease; and the doctors did not get beyond a fluffy sort of generalisation (as expressed in the *Annual Register*) that the disease was peculiarly attracted by "needy and squalid" states of life. Medically, however, there was this real gain: that observers of the disease became conversant with its natural course in individual cases, and especially that careful observers began to learn how commonly the attack begins as a gradually-accelerating diarrhœa. Dr. McCann, of Newcastle, who had known the disease in India, and took the lead in drawing attention to that feature of it, insisted strongly on the importance of the fact, with a view to the earliest possible treatment of cases of the disease: and he urged that, for dealing properly with incipient cases, there ought to be special dispensaries in infected districts. The handbill which the Central Board of Health recommended for circulation in infected districts, to warn people that "looseness of bowels is the beginning of cholera," and the recommendation of the Board, that a principal step to be taken in endangered districts is "the establishment of Cholera Dispensary Stations at which the poorer classes may receive medicine and medical advice gratuitously at all hours," accorded exactly with Dr. McCann's teaching, and apparently were due to it. In August, 1832, on occasion of the very severe

epidemic of Cholera, which there was at Bilston, near Wolverhampton, Dr. McCann was sent down by the Government to promote the adoption of the system he advised; and the local medical opinion of the time was, that by his treatment he stopped the epidemic.*

Popular retrospect.

Here ends the little there is to tell of our first British experiences of Cholera. The *Annual Register* for 1832, referring to the invasion as past, commented somewhat sharply on the tardiness with which Parliament had acted in relation to it, but seemed of opinion that, on the whole, too much fuss had been made about the invasion:—saying that "everywhere it was much less fatal than pre-conceived notions had anticipated"; that "the alarm was infinitely greater than the danger"; and that "when the disease gradually disappeared in the course of the autumn, almost everyone was surprised that so much apprehension had been entertained." The writer of 1833 had in view the skirts of a departing epidemic which had not been particularly severe; but if he, with the courage of a safe position, thought perhaps too lightly of the evil which cholera can work in these islands, materials for truer judgment have since that time been afforded us by other and more severe experiences of the disease.

Further effects from the period 1830-7.

Before passing from the reign of William the Fourth, which, as before mentioned, gave rise to no law of direct sanitary intention, it may be noted that two of the statutes of the reign had important, though unpremeditated, sanitary results. Thus, the important *Poor Law Amendment Act of England* of 1834 deserves particular mention in this place; not because of anything of sanitary intention in the Act contained; but because accidentally—through the good luck that Mr. Edwin Chadwick was made the Secretary of the new Poor Law Board, the Act gave occasion, a few years later, to a beginning of public sanitary enquiry in Great Britain. It also deserves notice that in the last year of

* See Nos. 1 and 2 of the Minutes of Evidence appended to the *Second Report of the Metropolitan Sanitary Commission*, 1848. In much later times Dr. Denis MacLoughlin (then resident in London) claimed to have independently adopted and acted upon the same doctrine in Paris in 1831.

the reign, the *Act for registering Births, Deaths, and Marriages* became law: an Act, under which it first became possible to construct statistics of life and death in this country: and under which (as will hereafter be more particularly noticed) the vast instructiveness of such statistics began soon afterwards to be illustrated.