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SHEFFIELD

CONDITION OF THE INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES

MEDICAL CHARITIES

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HOLLAND, G.C.

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MEDICAL CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

AN INQUIRY

INTO

THE MORAL, SOCIAL,

AND

Intellectual Condition

OF THE

INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES

OF

SHEFFIELD.

By G. C. Holland M.D.

PART I.

THE ABUSES AND EVILS OF CHARITY, ESPECIALLY OF MEDICAL CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD WHARNCLIFFE.

My Lord,

Your kindness and condescension, in allowing this inquiry to be dedicated to you, affords an humble individual the opportunity of expressing his admiration of the many qualities which do honour to the patriot and ennoble the man. Your talents, sterling integrity, and high-minded independence, have secured the good opinion of all parties. Your public and private virtues will ever be held in lively remembrance, and especially in this part of the kingdom, where they have long been actively and beneficially exercised. Amidst the cares and laborious duties of the statesman you have always interested yourself in every scheme to promote the welfare of your neighbourhood; and, regardless of the smiles or frowns of men, you have pursued a course of usefulness suited to your influential station in society. That you may live long in the enjoyment of health, domestic felicity, and that share of public respect and reverence to which your conduct and character entitle you, is the sincere wish and prayer of

Your Lordship's

Most devoted and obedient Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

It is scarcely necessary to introduce this literary trifle to the reader by any prefatory remarks; its title sufficiently indicates its nature and object. It may, however, be well to state, that it is the first of a series of investigations into the moral, social, and intellectual condition of the industrious classes in a strictly manufacturing district. The undertaking will be admitted to be one of practical value, and perhaps there never was a period when such investigations were calculated to be of equal service as at this time. The rapid strides of civilization, and its mighty and ever growing results—the extension of commerce—the creation of new interests—the evolution of new principles, feelings, tendencies, and motives, are fitted to excite deep and serious thought.

The age is marked by changes, the spirit and influence of which are exceedingly difficult of interpretation. A firm reliance on the presiding wisdom of Providence will not allow the mind, even in its perception of immediate evils, to doubt that ultimate and universal good is borne on the wings of innovation,—innovation springing from the unequivocal progress of knowledge. Time slowly withdraws the veil from the mysterious operations of nature. The truths which it conceals break only by fragments on the understanding.

The following is an humble attempt to trace and analyze the modified conditions of society, and thereby to gain a more elevated point from which to examine the dim and flickering lights of the present age, and, with a prophetic eye, to discern the glorious and matured truths of the future.

ABUSES AND EVILS

OF

MEDICAL CHARITIES.

THERE are few subjects more difficult than the present investigation, and none demanding more laborious and plodding research; not indeed in the closet, but in the varied and busy scenes of active life. Facts are not to be imagined, and at once reasoned upon:—nature, science, and art must be sternly interrogated, and when the answers have been weighed, analyzed, and stripped of whatever is adventitious, they are then, and not till then, matter for just reasoning.

The inquiry is not only comprehensive in its scope, but exceedingly complicated in its character; abounding in details, the value and importance of which can be appreciated only in the aggregate. To collect and classify these, as they bear on the established facts,

of art, science or nature, or indeed on principles which associate the objects of each, requires unwearied patience, and ample opportunities of investigation, and, in addition, acquirements much more varied and extensive than professional pursuits can possibly confer.

Though fully sensible of the difficulties and disadvantages under which we labour, encouragement is not wanting to stimulate the active powers of the mind. The readiness with which assistance may be obtained, and the conviction, that the results to which the inquiry leads are highly practical, and fraught with benefit to all classes of the community, are sufficient inducements. The study of one important section of society will evolve relations and tendencies common to the whole. The principles of human nature are not partial, and however greatly they may be modified by circumstances, there is much that remains unaltered, and susceptible of universal application.

Our attention has long been drawn to the consideration of the working classes, and more especially to those by whom we are immediately surrounded. Here there is too much that is radically bad not to excite serious reflection. Ignorance, dissipation, and misery appear to be interwoven with the very

texture of this portion of society. How little is the mass moved by objects of taste—by the glorious sublimities of nature! How few are the emotions awakened by the love of literature or of science! Are these gross and glaring defects attributable to bad government or imperfect legislation? An answer in the affirmative would shew little knowledge of the character of the existing evils. To call upon government for their redress would be about as wise and effective as a prayer offered to Jupiter. They spring from causes over which legislative enactments neither have nor ought to have any control. The remedies must be sought at home; they lie within the sphere of our influence.

The statistics of this large manufacturing community cannot fail to be interesting and instructive. The inquiry, if properly conducted, will enable us to examine society in its minutest relations. At present this is impossible. We look upon the mass, but discern not the causes which agitate its broken surface. One great inducement to undertake the task is the peculiarity of the trade. It is exceedingly unlike in its character, and consequently different in its effects, from that which employs the genius and enterprise of Manchester, Leeds, or Nottingham. It stands, indeed, alone. The statistics of these

important towns would throw little light on the constitution of society here. With us the distinctions between master and man are not always well marked. Persons are to a great extent both. The transition from one to the other is easy and frequent in those branches where the tools are few and simple, and the capital required extremely small, which applies largely to the whole of the cutlery department. This circumstance produces peculiar and striking effects on the character and condition of the working classes. It leads to the employment, in the manufactory, of women and children of both sexes at an early age; which is fraught with many injurious consequences. The idleness or the dissipation of the husband or father, or the occasional smallness of the remuneration for his labour, is unquestionably one cause of the evil.

All these circumstances must be largely in operation when men are masters of their own time, and free from the ordinary restrictions of well regulated factories. They are not taught daily the value of time, or the effects of its misapplication. They feel them, but they constantly draw on the future bills which time past has regularly dishonoured. Such is indeed the case with many workmen in the cutlery department, as we shall prove by well es-

tablished facts in the course of this inquiry. The facility with which men become masters causes extraordinary competition and, its inevitable result, insufficient remuneration.

The amount and influence of these evils will be subsequently considered. There are branches of manufactures extensively carried on in this town, as the silver-plated trade, and the heavy articles in the edge-tool business, especially, which are not open to all of the above objections. The former of these two offers a very marked distinction. The workmen are steady, intelligent, and orderly, seldom the recipients of charity or parochial relief. They depend on their own exertions for the respectable maintenance of their families, and when trade is depressed they strive to live on diminished wages, or fall back on resources secured by industry and economy. This healthy and vigorous condition is not attributable to high wages. The workmen in the edge-tool trade are extravagantly remunerated, and yet, as a body, they are perhaps as irregular and dissipated in their habits as any in the town. Their families in time of good trade feel few of the advantages of prosperity, and when labour is little in demand they are the first to need the aid of charity. These are differences familiar to the most superficial

observer of the social and moral condition of the workmen in the several branches. The facts on which these statements are founded will, in their proper place, be introduced in detail.

Most of the manufacturing towns in the kingdom have undergone extraordinary changes within the last half century. Manchester, Glasgow, Birmingham, and Leeds have, within this period, more than trebled their population and capital, and are now rapidly progressing. Imagination is not daring enough to define the probable limits of their increase. Genius, enterprise, and industry do not admit of severe calculation.

Sheffield has also trebled her population and wealth. She has not, however, taken her proper position among first rate towns. Her intelligence and wealth are by no means justly estimated. This arises in a great measure from the nature of her productions. Her merchants and manufacturers cannot become princes. There is not sufficient play for large fortunes, nor would these secure those peculiar advantages which invariably mark their influence in other situations. Novel and ingenious inventions, extensive speculations in the purchasing of raw material, are not features characteristic of our manufactures. The making of fortunes is with us a slow

process. It is, however, far from being partial, nor is it unaccompanied with advantages, which are often only incidental attendants on the sudden accumulation of wealth.

If our fortunes individually are much less than those of the merchants of Manchester or Glasgow, the longer period required in the making of them allows the mind time to adapt itself to its improved circumstances — not merely the speculative and money getting part of the understanding, but the whole of its social, moral, and intellectual powers, without which riches are a questionable good under this change. Accordingly, wealth and inelligence are with us more generally associated than in towns where immense fortunes are rapidly made. In the latter case there is no time for adaptation, nor is it deemed necessary, or at all important, where money is the measure by which all things are estimated. Another evil attendant on this sudden elevation in life is the great distance which is immediately placed between the employer and employed. The former is apt to be despotic, supercilious, and extortionate. The latter, abject and dependent.

There are, indeed, advantages of which it is difficult to form an opinion. The Fine Arts never flourish in a poor soil. The vital air of opulence

alone invigorates the root. The breath of encouragement must be redolent of riches to inspire and support genius. She demands an abundance of substantial food. To mete it out with a sparing and calculating hand freezes the struggling conceptions of the mind. The man whose moderate fortune is the result of years of application knows too well the value of money to give liberal encouragement to genius. His pride and ostentation must be gratified with something cheap, and always in a state of exhibition. A picture or a statue is too small for the public eye. When palaces and carriages are too common to be enviable distinctions of wealth, it is then that the Fine Arts are taken by the hand. They afford to the merchant-prince the means of stepping beyond his neighbours. It is not necessary that he should possess taste to appreciate them. This is a matter of no importance. Were it to be purchased he would be no bidder. They are for others to admire and wonder at, and not to awaken in his own breast the love of the beautiful.

We will not stay to inquire into the amount of good conferred by the encouragement of the Fine Arts; under these circumstances they are certainly not the most favourable that can be

imagined, either for their steady progression, or for imparting to society the elevating and refining influence of genius. Our business is to deal largely with facts, and such only as are practical. The objects of our inquiry are various.

I. We propose to examine the condition of the charitable institutions of the town; to point out their beneficial and injurious tendencies, and to suggest, in regard to some of them, such modifications as shall increase the good and diminish the evil with which they are fraught.

II. We shall investigate the social, intellectual, and moral conditions of our working classes; which will lead to the following inquiries:—

1stly. The average amount of wages of the different branches of trade.

2ndly. The social, intellectual, and moral condition of the workmen in the several branches.

3rdly. The proportion of women and children employed in each; stating whether the former be in the same room with the men, or *separate*, and at what age the latter are put to work. These general inquiries will lead to many others, which need not to be specified in this place.

III. The effects of Unions, or combinations of workmen, on themselves and on trade.

IV. The educational institutions of the town.

V. The number, strength, and wealth of sick clubs, and the causes of their frequent inefficiency or insolvency.

VI. The consumption of malt liquor and spirits, in the town, and the effects of beer-houses on the morals of society.

VII. The amount and character of crime for the last five years.

VIII. The effects of the Poor Laws on society.

IX. The character of the debts sought to be recovered in the Court of Requests, and of those which are served out in gaol.

X. The effects of the manufactures of this town, on the character and condition of workmen compared with those of other towns where machinery is extensively employed.

Each of the above heads involves many minor, but important considerations. Our business, at present, is with the charitable institutions of the town. The Infirmary, the Dispensary, the National, the Lancasterian and Sunday schools, and the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor, are the only institutions supported by voluntary subscriptions. The others, which will hereafter be enumerated, have permanent funds, which must be applied according

to the original request of the donor or donors. Our remarks on the latter will be few. They are not liable to much abuse, and are admitted to be exceedingly well managed.

Enlarged and liberal systems of education are frequently alluded to as the only correctives of ignorance and dissipation. Knowledge is unquestionably the great remedy, but that which is conveyed by instruction is not the only efficient means. The desire for knowledge is much more valuable than the truths which it frequently imparts. There is no inherent vitality in them. They are dead, as motives or influences, until breathed upon by the impassioned soul. The breathing process is the important consideration. How we shall thus awaken the mind to a consciousness of its own powers, to the contemplation of the good which it may secure, or of the evil which it may avert, is a difficult and complex problem. It may be made to perceive truths, but to feel and act upon them is another matter.

Writers on education have an exhaustless variety of schemes and plans to correct existing evils. According to their reasoning it is comparatively easy to elevate and refine the mass. They present us with physical, moral, and intellectual remedies, so

beautifully arranged, and with effects so eloquently stated, that the reader is apt to grow indignant that all this good has not been *perceived* by previous generations. The pictures are delightfully drawn. The imagination riots in the contemplation, and adds fresh touches to these graphic descriptions. Wisdom, innocence, and purity are prominent in the foreground, and in the distance the whole face of nature is smiling. There is no smoke from tall chimnies, nor are we greeted with the sight of the smutty artisan.

These writers belong to the Martin school of painting. They study effect. Their creations, viewed as a whole, are grand and imposing. To descend to particulars, to inquire after proportions, or to be solicitous about truth, is to disenchant the mind and to break the charm. What a pity that such writers are not practically acquainted with the materials they fashion into beauty and adorn with eloquence. To them it is no difficulty to describe things as they ought to be. A gay and lively fancy is sufficient for the purpose. To paint them as they are is a laborious task; it demands sacrifices and application to which they are altogether strangers. Years must be spent in the midst of manufactures, the branches and influence of which must be accurately

known; the wages which they yield—the fluctuations to which they are liable—the degree of independence of the workmen—the age and sex of the employed, and the nature of their association. The inquiry must not rest here: experience must furnish statistics of the inevitable results of good trade; the means which it affords for dissipation, idleness, and profligacy, and the effects of these on the individuals and on society; the irresistible temptation which it offers to young females to discard the smooth and even tenor of domestic duties, for the licentious freedom of the shop, and its higher remuneration. The consequences flowing from this change; immorality, early marriages, and their attendant evils, children and an ignorant mother. O! say these writers, "we intend to educate the mother. Until the mother be taught the infant cannot be taught, and until the infant be taught the child will not be *teachable*." Just reasoning!

The laws of nature, on which they pretend to found their systems, will offer insurmountable obstacles. Manufactures and commerce spring from the exercise of these laws, and are in strict harmony with them. Will they change the faculties of the mind, diminish its skill, and enfeeble its enterprise: will wealth, distinction, and luxurious en-

joyment be no longer motives to action: are mankind to be put into leading strings and taught new steps?

The habits engendered by a palmy state of trade are not corrected by depression. The transition from vice to virtue, from recklessness to sober reflection, is not easy. He who had neither time nor inclination to improve his mind, or the condition of his family, during prosperity, will not be an example of all that is good and desirable when the means of indulgence are abridged. His appetites are the last things he dreams of controlling. Nor are his resources at once exhausted. Debts are contracted, clubs are imposed upon, and charity contributes her aid. These, however, are not his only resources.—Dissipation and idleness are too ingenious in contrivance, to be cramped and confined within narrow limits.

Are these circumstances favourable to civilization? The atmosphere of misery is never healthy; the influences with which it is pregnant debase and deteriorate the whole faculties of the mind. The young are forced early to work, and those of both sexes who were previously employed are, with few restraints, disposers of their own time. The temptations are not towards intellectual pursuits or

moral obligations. The path in which these lie is too straight and restrictive in its privileges. The indulgence of the passions opens a much wider and more attractive field. Is this the school proper for the education of the future mother? Is it here that the systems of education will reach her, and convert all her sensual tendencies into virtuous emotions, and her grovelling views into high minded and ennobling principles? The systems may play around her head, but they will make little impression on her understanding. A return to prosperity will cause her to retrace her former steps, perhaps with less virtue and fewer good intentions.

These changes and habits are the inevitable fruits of manufactures. The hand of the dyer will ever be imbued with the colour in which he works. It is not to be inferred, from these remarks, that we are opposed to education, or despair altogether of some good being effected by it. We have ever been friendly to the diffusion of knowledge, and regard it as the hand-maid to virtue. Our wish is not to abridge, but if possible to extend its blessings. The present inquiry is, indeed, the prompting of that feeling. The striking difference between us and the zealous advocate of educational systems is with respect to the means it is desirable to employ, and

the results to which we may confidently look forward. We have lived among the mass, and reason from daily observation. Our situation may, perhaps, be considered as tending rather to narrow than enlarge the views of the mind. It may be said, we have not looked sufficiently abroad. It is safer, however, to ascend from particulars to the contemplation of systems, than to examine particulars through the medium of systems. The one method always affords truth, the other frequently presents visions.

In discussing the social, intellectual, and moral condition of this country, writers are constantly making reference to the beneficial working of the parochial schools in Scotland, and to the comprehensive system of education adopted in Prussia. Both are adduced as evidence of the necessity and excellence of a national system of education in this country. There is little, however, in common between the masses in England and those of Scotland and Prussia. In the former, where the operation of the schools is efficient, it is in agricultural or thinly populated districts, and not in densely crowded cities. The wages in such situations have two conditions, which it is important to keep in mind. They are low and subject to little variation. The

one condition does not admit of extravagance or dissipation, but keeps alive the industrious habits of the individual. With him, it is not a matter of choice what kind of school his children shall attend. Necessity compels him to take that which has been provided, and its advantages are valued from the reflection, or the hope, that they are to fit his children for lighter and higher duties than his own, in a more congenial soil.

This feeling naturally arises in the mind where the means of employment are extremely limited, and the remuneration small. The comparative steadiness of the wages has a beneficial influence. The habits change with circumstances. When these are constantly vacillating, there cannot be any thing fixed or permanent in the human character. The frequent transition from one condition of life to another, which is inevitable in a commercial and manufacturing community, will greatly disturb the application of any general system of education.

The strength of the moral and religious feelings of a people may in some degree be estimated by the nature of their occupations, and the amount of the remuneration. The more agricultural the former, and the steadier the latter, the more intense and elevated the moral and religious feelings. To excite these in densely

populated situations, in the midst of manufactures, has not yet been accomplished, and hence the co-operation of such valuable agents is not to be calculated upon to the same extent in this country, in conjunction with educational systems, as in Scotland or Prussia. The conclusion is painful, but the fact is indisputable.

What is there in common between this country and Prussia to render the educational institutions of the one applicable to the wants of the other? It is scarcely possible to imagine two nations more dissimilar in character. The one free as the air we breathe; the other possessing only a graduated freedom. The resources of the one country sufficient for its wants; the resources of the other altogether inadequate; and consequently, whilst the energies of the one are chiefly employed at home, those of the other are engaged in every part of the habitable globe. The powers of the one are always on the stretch, admitting of no relaxation. To pause is not to stand still, but to fall down. The pressure from without is not in one direction only: all classes of society feel it, and nearly in the same degree. The forces from behind warn us that we must move forward, and there is no resisting the momentum.

Perhaps it may be asked, why all this activity and restless enterprise? Cannot happiness be purchased at a less expenditure of physical and mental energy. Happiness, in the state-vocabularly, is an old fashioned word exceedingly difficult of definition. The sources of the feeling are little understood and less studied. In another century the word will be quite obsolete. The one to which it has given place is expediency, which implies acting as we are forced.

In Prussia there is not the same wear and tear of human nature. The impulses from within, and the pressure from without, are so nicely balanced, and the solicitations to action so moderate, that the mind has leisure to reflect on individual and general good, not in connection with, but apart from commercial speculations. The situation of the people is enviable, but unfortunately it is beyond imitation. The attempt would be as ridiculous as the giant endeavouring to clothe himself in the habiliments of the dwarf. The cutting down of the one to the proportions of the other would be an exceedingly painful operation. Our proportions are not the produce of a morbid growth; they are the result of the healthy and vigorous exercise of the energies of the state. The institutions which fit a country are not made to order, after a given pattern; they

spring spontaneously from its bosom, and if not always expressing the wants of the times, indicating an approximation to a better order of things which is practicable. As already stated, we object not to education, nor doubt for a moment its beneficial influence, but we question the practicability of applying any national system to the necessities of this country.

Can it be urged on our consideration on the plea that the mass generally are too poor to provide for their own mental improvement? Certainly not. They are abundantly capable of educating their children. One-fifth of what they spend in dissipation would be an ample fund for the purpose.

Is it imagined that, if we took upon ourselves the duties and expense, the surplus means would be husbanded, or that children would be allowed to remain at school sufficiently long to be well-grounded in principles? If this conclusion has been arrived at, it is not sound. The surplus means would be spent in the further indulgence of the appetites. The dissipation, with few exceptions, is proportionate to the wages, and, if the necessary claims upon them be diminished, there will be less inducement to economize.

The error to which the present age is prone is

not doing too little, but too much, for the working population. Benevolence is not an unmixed good. There never was a period when knowledge was so generally diffused as now, and there never was an equal amount of vice, dissipation, or reckless conduct. Ill-judged benevolence is one great cause of the evil. It is impossible to contemplate the condition of the mass without the conviction forcing itself on the mind, that incalculable mischief has been produced by indiscriminate acts of benevolence, performed with the best intentions.

We are daily teaching, and we have largely taught, by zealous philanthropic exertions, that the working classes have no occasion to exercise any forethought against the ordinary accidents of life, or the vicissitudes of trade. Their business is to enjoy life with the produce of their labour, without being disturbed by the reflection that it is necessary to lay aside a portion of their earnings for the education of their children, or to make a provision against sickness, family misfortunes, or the depression of commerce. The children are taught at the expense of the public; for the slightest ailments they at once apply to charitable institutions; and when out of employment the parish has hitherto been their immediate resource. To provide for the future, or to overcome

evils when they arise, by their own meritorious exertions, is so far from being a consideration with the many *that the feeling is fast ceasing to be regarded as commendable.* Why should they incur any expense, or be called upon to abridge their comforts or extravagant tastes, when the public, without a question, exempts them from either alternative? That proud independent character which once distinguished them is greatly on the decline. At one time, they would have spurned the idea of being recipients of charity, viewing the act as lowering them in the scale of society, which it unquestionably does, and would have felt, had they taken advantage of it, that the cup of misfortune had at last overflowed. Now, to be indebted to others for charity is regarded as scarcely incurring one particle of obligation. The evil is much greater than can possibly be imagined by the superficial observer of society. It is deep and extensively spreading, and is more powerfully counteracting the effects of education than any other cause in operation. The one offers precepts only, the other example, which pollutes the spring of human action.

There are few things more injurious to the community than the want of self-respect or independence in the working classes. This feeling is a greater

safe-guard against intemperance and vicious habits than any which can be called into exercise. It stimulates and elevates the tone of the mind. It preserves, indeed, many of the finer susceptibilities of the soul, and spreads abroad a healthy and purifying influence. There is no character more worthy of admiration than an honest, industrious, and respectable mechanic. Human nature wants nothing of its dignity in such an individual.

It is the object of education to form this character, but it frequently exists in combination with very limited knowledge, and is often most glaringly deficient where education has been largely conferred. There is, indeed, no necessary connection between the two, as cause and effect. Knowledge is as prone to give rise to pride, vanity, and conceit, as to create self-respect or becoming independence. The predominating passion will be determined by the natural constitution of the mind, and the circumstances in which the individual is placed, rather than by the amount of knowledge possessed.

In objection to this remark, it may perhaps be urged, that the education has been imperfect; and can it possibly ever be otherwise with the great mass, who have to labour for the necessaries of life; whose bodily exertions offer a sufficient outlet

for the escape of nervous energy? It is incompatible with the laws of the animal economy that both mind and body shall toil, and knowledge does not fall upon the understanding like the sunshine on the flower. It penetrates slowly and with great difficulty into the recesses of the mind, and is long before it awakens the finer and more ennobling emotions, which, when conjoined with principles, give strength and dignity to character.

We are aware that the advocates for national and comprehensive systems of education contend that, in a better state of things, which their fancy pictures as not far distant, man will not labour as at present. The duties of the day will be so divided, that bodily and mental exertion will alternate in such a manner that the one will be a stimulus to the other rather than a process of exhaustion. This is certainly not impossible; but were they to tell us that wings would at the same time shoot from the shoulders, to enable the artisan to breathe a purer air, during his intellectual flights, we should regard both as having equal claims to belief. Our credulity is not very strong. The stern realities of life are not favourable to its growth. The following eloquent passage from the work of a zealous and good man, in support of a national system of education,

will show what extravagant results are anticipated from its operation. He is describing the improved mechanic.

"He reads, but his taste being already formed by useful and wholesome reading, by the wise 'moral course of his mother tongue,' by the judicious 'political and historical elements,' by the practical 'public and domestic economy' instruction which he has received, there is no danger that he will turn from food like this to batten upon garbage. His habits instinctively direct him what to read; and what he reads the same tastes naturally convert into nutriment, and not poison. He acquaints himself more thoroughly with the true principles on which his public and private interests should rest. He examines into the real causes of those social changes by which his trade, or the trade of those around him, is affected. He provides new safeguards against error, new defences of truth; or familiarizes himself still more with those standard works of the language whose high moral temper, combined with their surpassing literary excellence, are amongst the best antidotes against the coarse seductions of licentious and debasing publications. This has not been an education of reading and writing only, he has not been turned out upon the street with this poor but dangerous gift. The instrument has been confided to his hand early, but early also has he been taught to use it. The various illusions which successively disturb the reason, and so seriously peril the prosperity of others, pass him by. He is not swept into the vortex of every sudden strife by the passion or ignorance of his fellow operatives. He is accustomed to carry his cool eye beyond the temporary or local evil. He confides boldly in himself and the future. He understands the working of the

machine, and is not fretted up into sudden violence by any transient jerk or jog. Least of all, for the purpose of an imaginary improvement in his condition, will he rush into those anti-social schemes, generally the desire of successless or malignant selfishness, which, for the sake of a miserable momentary profit or popularity, compromise all improvement, and cast on the hazard of a die, perhaps not merely the regeneration, but the very existence of their country. His "patriotism" will not expend itself in nourishing in the bosom of the land the seeds of political disorganization, that on the first touch of disaster they may split, not merely rank from rank, but rend asunder the strong and venerable foundations of the social system itself. But not on knowledge only has he to rely. He is moral and religious: a morality of religion which is bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, which is not to be seduced or terrified from the guard and keeping of his public and private conduct. He not only knows his interest, but his duty; and not only knows it, but has been 'habituated' to perform it."

Here is a picture of the artisan! cool, calculating, enlightened, and philosophic; profoundly acquainted with all things, and constantly acting on the suggestions of a sound and well-instructed understanding. How exquisitely beautiful the picture, and how true are the outlines and shading to the experience of mankind! The mass will not be taught, however, to depend on their own exertions by any enlarged views presented to the mind. It must be by making them feel the effects of misconduct and intemperance,

and they will never feel them acutely so long as their necessities, and those of their family, are promptly relieved, without regard to the previous earnings or conduct of the individuals. * The more that is done for them, the less they will certainly

* In the thirty-first report of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor in this town, some valuable information is given respecting the habits and condition of the working classes, at a period when trade was exceedingly good. This society confers incalculable benefits with very limited resources. The mode in which it is managed admits of fewer abuses than any other charity. Neither money nor clothing is furnished without a personal investigation into the circumstances of the applicants by female visitors, who are well qualified to perform the duty which they kindly undertake. They were requested in 1835 to collect information in their respective districts, under each of the subjoined heads. The following extracts are from the report which was drawn up on the occasion.

1st. Are the Poor in full employment at their usual trades?

The general answer to this question is in the affirmative. There is sufficient employment for industrious working people, in most or all the branches of trade and manufacture in Sheffield. Those who complain of want in this respect are generally the idle and the intemperate.

2nd. Do they send those children to school who are of a suitable age, and take care that they attend regularly?

The children are not sent to school so generally or so regularly as they ought to be. Many parents, from negligence or perverseness, do not avail themselves of the privilege of our public schools on the week days; either thinking the little they can learn at Sabbath Schools sufficient, or being heedless whether they learn any thing but to work at some business, by which, at the early age of nine or ten years, and upwards, they may earn something, if it be but a shilling or eighteen pence a week, towards the maintenance of the family. For this sordid profit, boys and girls, who were making good progress in useful knowledge at the National, Lancasterian, and other excellent schools, have been removed to shops and warehouses, to the injury of their health and morals, as well as their bereavement of the best means of preparation for their duties in after life.

3rd. Do they lay up part of their weekly earnings for providing against illness, or to pay their rent, &c.?

The answers to this question, of course, according to circumstances, are various—many appear desirous to avail themselves of the Society's plan of

do for themselves. The awakening of their own faculties, or the breathing process, by which the

receiving deposits and returning them with premiums, where the family earnings are so small as to justify the visitors in affording them this advantage; which, on account of the limited sums that can be set apart for the purpose, cannot be extended to those who are in full employment. Nor, even where they might be allowed this privilege and benefit, are they always self-denying or considerate enough to do as they profess. In one district, out of thirty individuals who expressed their wish to be depositors only two became such.

4th. Do they endeavour to keep their children clean, their clothes neatly mended, &c., and their houses clean, and frequently whitewashed?

Different parts of the town differ considerably in these respects, as well as different families, according to their habits. In all parts there are streets and alleys where both the dwellings and the inmates are notoriously dirty, and there the manners of old and young are correspondingly gross. But in general it may be said that far greater attention is paid to cleanliness and comfort, personal and domestic, than was the case when this Society was first established. The visitors have not laboured in vain, for so many years, to introduce habits of order, decency, and neatness, in the homes of the poor.

5th. Have you observed any increase or diminution of intemperance; if you have, to what cause do you attribute it, and why?

The answer of all the returns to this question is,—that intemperance has increased within late years, which, in a great measure, may be attributed to multiplied temptations to indulge in it, from the great number of beer-houses and dram-shops, which have been opened in every part of the town and neighbourhood. The comparatively low prices of those pernicious articles which are sold, as malt-liquor and ardent spirits, and the comparatively good wages which moderate labour can now obtain, are facilities that too frequently induce fathers and husbands to neglect their wives and children, for the society of drunken companions in the evening, and to make the early part of the week a time of idleness and dissipation, utterly incompatible with home felicity, and destructive, in the end, both of the health and character of themselves and their families.

6th. Are the poor regular in their attendance at some place of worship, and in taking their families thither?

In one district, it is stated, by a person well qualified to form a right estimate, that scarcely one family in twenty is in the practice of attending Divine service in Church or chapel. Other accounts, though less unfavourable, prove that there is a lamentable neglect of outward as well as spiritual observance of the Sabbath, by the worship of Almighty God, in public and in private.

mind starts into conscious existence and vigorous exercise, will mainly be accomplished by throwing them upon their own resources. They must not be taught to fall back upon charity, in cases of trivial emergency, as a good to which they have an undoubted right. This feeling takes away all idea of exertion. The sacrifice of independence should not be made without a struggle. The effort to preserve it is salutary, and ought to be encouraged. Supposing, in the attempt, debts and obligations are incurred which compel strict economy, or occasion certain privations. There is nothing hard, cruel, or unjust in this. There would be great cruelty and injustice were it otherwise. Existing debts are not discharged the more readily from the assistance which is rendered. He who condescends to ask charity, for the relief of the necessities springing out of his own misconduct, is not in a position favourable for having the principle of honour or honesty strengthened. The whole mind becomes morally diseased. The self-respect is gone, and, with it, the seeds of many virtues. The struggle which is made to overcome difficulties is fraught with benefits much greater than the good which immediately follows. The sun when it descends beneath the horizon leaves traces of light and beauty behind it, and the virtuous

struggle of independence leaves evidence of its existence, in just and practical views of life, and in impressions which do not allow the individual to relapse into apathy or indifference. Let the charity, whatever be its nature, hinge on circumstances. To present it as a certainty to all who may please to apply, without the strictest inquiry into the condition, habits, and income of the parties, is to encourage the most flagrant impositions; is, in fact, to hold out a premium to idleness, dissipation, and intemperance. Charity should never be on an inclined plane. The path leading to it should have difficulties, but of such a nature, that they neither arrest the efforts, nor for a moment fret the honest feelings of the really necessitous. The indiscriminate exercise of it is the parent of many evils. It is often absorbed not only by improper objects, but the stream, in consequence, does not flow in sufficient abundance to the truly miserable and destitute. These are, indeed, often deprived of the benefits which they urgently require, from possessing less intelligence and interest than the greater part of those who receive them. The former are frequently ignorant of the steps necessary to be taken to procure gratuitous aid, or, if acquainted with the means, they find on application that the privileges which subscribers to charitable in-

stitutions are permitted to exercise have already been trespassed upon to the full extent; and by whom, but improper objects? We speak from a knowledge of facts of frequent occurrence. Is this a healthy and natural state of things? Shall the stream of charity any longer be allowed to diverge from its proper course, and undermine the foundations of independence, and thereby create tendencies to pauperism? The first step taken towards obtaining charity gives a taste and inclination which renders all subsequent steps perfectly easy. There is no compunctious or delicate feeling to overcome. The mind coolly views the advantage, and at once participates in it. But the proper exercise of charity demands much greater consideration than the benevolent sometimes imagine. It is a sacred trust, liable to abuse, and it is useful only when it relieves pressing necessities, and in such a manner, that the recipients are not taught to depend upon it. It must not paralyze, by the fulness of its bounty, the mental or bodily exertions: it should never pass from the hand without reflection. It is, indeed, an instrument powerful either to good or evil; and it is a question, whether the mischief resulting from its mal-administration is not greater than is counterbalanced by the benefits which it confers. It is no proof of

benevolence in all cases to relieve bodily wants and to alleviate human suffering; but ministering to necessities to which the ability or exertions of the sufferers are altogether inadequate; this alone shows the proper exercise of benevolence; and any deviation from the principle appears to us a serious evil to society, as well as eventually to him who receives the charity. The true interests of both are inseparable.

In order to show the justness of these general remarks, we shall proceed to investigate the working of the charitable medical institutions of this town. The undertaking is beset with no ordinary difficulties. It includes inquiries demanding much patient labour and thought. Shall we anticipate, among the difficulties, the prejudices of the warm philanthropist, or the unfriendly feelings of those whose impositions it is our business to expose? Our apprehensions in regard to the former excite no uneasiness, for our motives cannot be mistaken.

It is not our wish to interrupt or diminish the stream of charity; we would rather give it additional strength; and our exertions will accomplish that object if we succeed in directing it more largely to the needy and destitute. We set little value on the opinions of the many who have lost their self-respect

or independence in receiving that to which they have no right. The front of palpable dishonesty is never very appalling; and it will be proved, by indisputable facts, that a thorough searching reform in these institutions is imperatively demanded, and if not carried into effect the prevailing system will go far towards pauperizing the whole of the working classes. It has already done incalculable mischief, and to correct it will demand a steady and determined hand. All institutions are liable to abuse; and perhaps none more so than those whose foundation is charity. These hold out a strong temptation to the unprincipled to take advantage of the good which is freely offered to the world. Those on whom the duty devolves of distributing the charity too frequently give themselves little trouble to ascertain the worthiness of the objects; and, in many cases, this important duty is delegated to those who institute no inquiries whatever.

It is indeed a fact placed beyond all question, that any number of tickets may be procured for the Sheffield General Infirmary without the applicants, or their condition, being in the slightest degree known to the parties who recommend. It is not necessary, in this place, to explain how, — the fact and the means are equally notorious. One individual, whose

annual subscription is two guineas, recommends to the Infirmary almost one third of the patients, without knowing any thing of their circumstances or condition in life. In one year, it was ascertained he gave 371 recommendations, 81 of which were for In-patients. To-day the patients admitted on our books only are 21, seven of these are recommended by him.

The abuse, in this particular instance, arises from the impression, that benevolence ought not to be stinted in its privileges! and it would indeed be illiberal to confine it within narrow limits, providing it were exercised with judgment. Without this, it is a positive and serious evil.

Of late years there has been a wide departure from the original intentions of the founders, and great violence done to the spirit of this charity, from want of clearly defined ideas in regard to the circumstances which entitle applicants to its benefit. When first established, it was for the poor and necessitous of all nations, and this of course was understood to mean, such only as were incapable of otherwise procuring the required aid. It could not possibly have been contemplated that its blessings should be distributed indiscriminately to the working classes; that the fact of an individual being an ope-

rative furnished at once a sufficient claim. We will not insult the memories of the good by a supposition so little in harmony with their enlightened benevolence. Their consideration was for the poor and destitute, and not for the well-fed and well-paid operative. He was not the object of their solicitude. Such, however, is the departure from the principles on which this institution was originally based, that it is now sufficient to be one of the working classes to be entitled to its benefit. The artisan never dreams of the possibility of rejection on the ground of being in full and regular employment, and being amply remunerated for his labour. He applies now as naturally to the charity when sick as he does to the tailor for the repair of his clothes, with this difference, that he would be perfectly astonished were any one to hint at the propriety of paying for the favours conferred by the former. He regards the charity as his inherent right, the unquestionable right of labour, independent of any accompanying circumstances. With this feeling of dependence and security, he has no motive to economise or to think for the future. The public kindly provides for all his wants: labour and enjoyment are the occupations of his life.

This is a state of things that ought not to be

allowed to exist. If the door is to be thus thrown open it will cease to be an institution of charity, for this implies a ministering to necessities which would otherwise be neglected. Specific laws are required to chalk out distinctly the objects worthy of relief. It is not difficult to define some of the conditions which ought to exclude from a participation in the charity.

In the first place, single men in employment have not the slightest claim. If they have failed to provide against the day of sickness when the opportunities were abundant, promptly to relieve their wants is to teach them there is no necessity for careful and economical habits on their part. If they are not too ill to be incapacitated from pursuing their vocations, it is a gross imposition to extend to them the charity, and if otherwise, they have always homes. It may perhaps be urged in objection, that they will necessarily incur debts in providing at this time medical assistance. This, so far from being an objection, is an exceedingly powerful argument for throwing them upon their own resources. They will thus be taught practically the injurious effects of misconduct: the struggle to overcome the subsequent difficulties is indeed better calculated to awaken reflection, and suggest rules for future gui-

dance, than any discourse, however beautiful and just its views, The one leaves impressions which constantly intrude on the consideration of the mind; the other passes away with the dreams of morning.

Secondly. It could not possibly be contemplated to extend the charity to the married operative in work, with only a young and small family. What claim has he upon the funds of the Institution, certainly not those of destitution? Are his children to be taught from the moment they breathe, and is the lesson to be inculcated daily, to the years of maturity, that charity is the great good to which their aspirations are to be directed? Is indeed the first instruction to be that of dependence?

Thirdly. The operative receiving high wages, if he please to work, though he may have several children, can have no just claim on the charity. He has the means, and he must be made to provide for the various wants of his family.

Fourthly. The operative who has several sons or apprentices working for him is in no degree entitled to the benefits of the charity. His circumstances are very remote from those of destitution.

Fifthly. Neither male nor female servants in place, and attending to their respective duties, are proper objects of relief. To extend the charity to

them is to save the pockets of their employers, which certainly was not contemplated in the formation of the Institution. Such conduct is indeed unfeeling and unjust. Those on whom we depend for comforts ought to be treated with much greater kindness and consideration. To direct their footsteps to a charity is, not to elevate, but to lower the moral sentiments.

The above conditions will perhaps be admitted, as amply sufficient to exclude improper objects from a participation in the benefits of a charitable institution; and some persons may probably be surprised to learn that, obvious and distinctive as they may appear in character, they have long ceased to invalidate the application of individuals. In evidence of this, we shall shortly adduce indisputable facts.* Before proceeding to this part of the inquiry, we shall bring under consideration circumstances which alone go far towards proving that charitable institutions are grossly imposed upon. The intelligent and reflecting mind will scarcely desire stronger evidence than these general facts. The distresses of a community will be admitted to bear a strict relation to the state of trade. When this is extremely depressed many hands are necessarily thrown out of employment. When the trade is good the demand for labour is great, wages advance, and

the blessings of plenty are universally experienced. The amount of misery or destitution cannot be the same in these very different circumstances. It cannot be a fixed quantity floating in society. The idea is preposterous, and yet, if the registered demand for charity be any criterion of the misery existing, there is indeed a quantity subject to scarcely any variation whatever.

From Midsummer 1835 to Midsummer 1836, between which periods trade was better in this town than it had been known for years, the number of patients admitted on the books of the Infirmary was 3,126.

From Midsummer 1836 to Midsummer 1837, between which periods the trade was exceedingly depressed, the number was 3,431, being an increase only of 305 patients.

Between the former periods the number of patients on the books of the Dispensary was 2,888.

Between the latter periods, that is, from July 1836 to July 1837, the number was 2,575, being less by 313 patients.

According to these returns there were eight patients more during a prosperous state of trade, recipients of medical charity, than during the severe depression of it. In attempting to account for this extraordinary fact it may be urged, that in the best state of com-

merce the truly poor and miserable are sufficient to absorb the charity arising from subscriptions to each Institution, and hence, it would be unreasonable to expect any diminution of applicants at this time. This supposition is not very probable, but, admitting it to be well founded, it leads to this conclusion, that when trade is depressed such means of relief are altogether inadequate to minister to the necessities of the lower classes. If at one time, when manufactures are flourishing, the deserving objects are about 6,000, at another, when employment is scarce, and poverty and misery are generally prevailing, the necessitous, who are incapable of providing medical aid, must indeed amount to three times this number. The view we are disposed to take of the question is, that the demand will always be equal to the means of supply. An increase of the latter will invariably be attended with a proportionate augmentation of the former. The numbers relieved are therefore no criterion of the actual amount of the distress existing. They are a measure only of the successful applications of the parties.

Nature is said to have a horror of a vacuum, and the mass of society have the same feeling; they rush at once towards the point where the pressure is diminished in all charitable institutions. In corroboration of this

and the foregoing remarks, we shall adduce facts, which cannot fail to awaken the attention of the public to the gross impositions practised on medical charities. The gratitude of mankind, as a general rule, bears a close relation to the sense of the evils relieved. In conferring benefits, we are often disappointed in our expectation of a suitable acknowledgment. Indeed, the ingratitude of mankind is proverbial. This feeling, however, rarely exists in those who are worthy of the good bestowed. It is found largely among improper objects, that is, persons whose necessities have no just claim upon our sympathy. The truly poor and miserable are not ungrateful. Their conduct always indicates the depth and sincerity of the obligations they feel.

The published reports of the Infirmary and the Dispensary will show that an immense number of patients are annually benefited by the charities, and yet think it too much trouble to return thanks. The number is indeed greatly on the increase, as the following facts, copied from the printed reports of the Infirmary, distinctly prove.

From Midsummer 1822 to Midsummer 1823.

The Out-patients	Cured were	971
Ditto	Relieved	488
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	230

From Midsummer 1823 to Midsummer 1824.

The Patients	Cured were	986
Ditto	Relieved	432
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	198

From Midsummer 1824 to Midsummer 1825.

The Patients	Cured were	983
Ditto	Relieved	452
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	234

From Midsummer 1825 to Midsummer 1826.

The Patients	Cured were	913
Ditto	Relieved	466
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	292

From Midsummer 1826 to Midsummer 1827.

The Patients	Cured were	1,408
Ditto	Relieved	702
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	397

In these years the gross number of Out-patients Cured and Relieved was	7,801
The number Discharged for Non-attendance ...	1,351

With few exceptions the Out-patients discharged for non-attendance are either cured or relieved. The rule of the Institution respecting the discharge of patients for non-attendance is, that if they fail to visit the Physician or Surgeon once in three weeks they forfeit the privileges to which they are entitled by the recommendation. The rule is, however, by no means strictly acted upon. They are

seldom discharged under six weeks or two months. We will now examine the number discharged within the last five years, cured, relieved, and for non-attendance. The latter class will be found to have greatly increased.

From Midsummer 1833 to Midsummer 1834.

The Out-patients	Cured were	909
Ditto	Relieved	241
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	260

From Midsummer 1834 to Midsummer 1835.

The Out-patients	Cured were	958
Ditto	Relieved	208
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	308

From Midsummer 1835 to Midsummer 1836.

The Out-patients	Cured were	961
Ditto	Relieved	195
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	282

From Midsummer 1836 to Midsummer 1837.

The Out-patients	Cured were	1,059
Ditto	Relieved	229
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	434

From Midsummer 1837 to Midsummer 1838.

The Out-patients	Cured were	1,282
Ditto	Relieved	265
Ditto	Discharged for Non-attendance ...	464

The gross number of Patients Cured and Relieved from Midsummer 1833 to Midsummer 1838 is ...	6,307
Discharged for Non-attendance	1,748

Hence it follows from these data, that in the former five years nearly one patient in seven failed to return thanks to the Board, but in the latter five years a little more than one in four patients. The number, however, which ought to be recorded as discharged for non-attendance is considerably greater than is here stated. The error arises from this circumstance. The House Surgeon occasionally examines the books of the medical officers to ascertain the number of patients who have not visited the Institution for many weeks. The references to the pages where such are found are laid before the Physician or Surgeon, with a request that he will report upon them. All these of course ought to be put down as discharged for irregularity, but this is not the case. We speak for ourselves. On referring to the pages he recollects that many of the cases were nearly cured, or greatly relieved, when last seen by him, and hence these are generally reported as cured or relieved. Those of whom he has no recollection are reported as discharged for irregular attendance. This introduces an error into the published returns. It makes the number of cured and relieved greater than it really is, and that of the discharged for non-attendance less than

what is stated to be, so that taking into consideration this circumstance, it may be asserted that not one Out-patient in three, admitted on the books of the Institution, returns thanks for the good which he has received, either to the Board or to the recommender.

In examining a hundred medical cases taken indiscriminately from the Out-patients' book of the current year, it was found that fifty-three only had been regular in attendance. Of the remaining forty-seven, it was not possible to give any account. Two or three months had elapsed since they had visited the Institution. We shall now endeavour to determine what proportions of the fifty-three, or indeed, what is the average proportion of the patients discharged, cured, or relieved, who give themselves the trouble to express their obligations. The question is by no means difficult of solution. Every Tuesday the Out-patients, reported cured or relieved, are individually and distinctly informed to return thanks every Friday, on which occasion they receive a letter, addressed to the recommender, stating the result of the case, which they are requested to take. The In-patients, cured, relieved, or discharged at their own desire, return thanks at the same time

to the Board, and consequently in the following numbers both are included.

Infirmary, December 7th, 1838.

In-Patients Discharged	14	In-Patients Admitted	15
Out-Patients Discharged	27	Out-Patients Admitted	35
Total of the In and Out-Patients Discharged ...			41
Number who returned thanks			14

December 14th.

In-Patients Discharged	14	In-Patients Admitted	14
Out-Patients Discharged	51	Out-Patients Admitted	35
Total of In and Out-Patients Discharged ...			65
Number who returned thanks			20

December 21st.

In-Patients Discharged	17	In-Patients Admitted	14
Out-Patients Discharged	56	Out-Patients Admitted	28
Total of the In and Out-Patients Discharged ...			73
Number who returned thanks			15.

December 28th.

In-Patients Discharged	9	In-Patients Admitted	15
Out-Patients Discharged	13	Out-Patients Admitted	19
Total of the In and Out-Patients Discharged ...			22
Number who returned thanks			2

January 4th, 1839.

In-Patients Discharged	10	In-Patients Admitted	16
Out-Patients Discharged	28	Out-Patients Admitted	48
Total of the In and Out-Patients Discharged ...			38
Number who returned thanks			10

January 11*th.*

In-patients Discharged	10	In-Patients Admitted	18
Out-Patients Discharged	28	Out-Patients Admitted	48

Total of the In and Out-Patients Discharged ... 48

Number who returned thanks 30

In the foregoing six weeks 287 patients were discharged, and of these ninety-one only are recorded as having returned thanks, which is not one in three. The proportion would be considerably less, were the In-patients not included in the account. As these leave the house at the time the Board is sitting, it may reasonably be expected that they will generally be discharged in the regular way, receiving a letter addressed to the recommender, stating the result of the case, and thus, the number of those who make no acknowledgment will be greatly increased. This appears to be borne out by facts.

On December 14th, the In-patients Discharged were		14
Do.	the Out-patients do.	51

Of the former, 7 returned thanks; of the latter, 13 only.

On December 21st, the In-patients Discharged were		17
Do.	the Out-patients do.	56

Of the former, seven returned thanks; of the latter, eight only. These proportions will of course vary weekly, but it may be safely asserted, that of the Out-patients admitted on the books not

above one third give themselves the trouble to return any acknowledgment. The data on which these statements rest are furnished by the Secretary, whose authority cannot in the slightest degree be impugned.

Before making any remarks on these extraordinary facts, we shall proceed to show that irregularities among the In-patients have also greatly increased of late years. Patients, when insolent, disobedient, or filthy in their habits, or in any way mis-conducting themselves, are dismissed the house, and are reported as discharged for irregularity.

From Midsummer 1822 to Midsummer 1823.

The In-patients	Cured were	293
Ditto	Relieved	68
Ditto	Discharged for irregularity	6

From Midsummer 1823 to Midsummer 1824.

The In-patients	Cured were	278
Ditto	Relieved	88
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	11

From Midsummer 1824 to Midsummer 1825.

The In-patients	Cured were	305
Ditto	Relieved	109
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	7

From Midsummer 1825 to Midsummer 1826.

The In-patients	Cured were	319
Ditto	Relieved	77
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	10

From Midsummer 1826 to Midsummer 1827.

The In-patients	Cured were	417
Ditto	Relieved	121
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	9
In these years, the gross number of In-patients Cured and Relieved was		2075
The number Discharged for Irregularity		43

We will now examine the number of cured, relieved, and discharged for irregularity during the last five years.

From Midsummer 1833 to Midsummer 1834.

The In-patients	Cured were	324
Ditto	Relieved	64
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	36

From Midsummer 1834 to Midsummer 1835.

The In-patients	Cured were	363
Ditto	Relieved	59
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	35

From Midsummer 1835 to Midsummer 1836.

The In-patients	Cured were	348
Ditto	Relieved	43
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	33

From Midsummer 1836 to Midsummer 1837.

The In-patients	Cured were	364
Ditto	Relieved	60
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	38

From Midsummer 1837 to Midsummer 1838.

The In-patients	Cured were	337
Ditto	Relieved	48
Ditto	Discharged for Irregularity ...	33

The gross number of In-patients Cured and Relieved, within the last Five Years, is 2010
The number Dismissed the House for Misconduct is 175

In the former five years, one patient in forty-nine is discharged for irregularity; in the latter five-years, one in twelve. According to this statement, the accuracy of which cannot be called in question, the irregularity of the In-patients has increased in a much greater ratio than that of the Out-patients. That of the former is above four-fold what it was eleven years ago. That of the latter has been doubled within the same period.

The number of In and Out-patients stated as discharged for irregularity or non-attendance is not compared with the gross amount of the patients treated, remaining on the books, or otherwise disposed of, but only with the numbers placed in each case under corresponding heads. For example, the number discharged at their own desire, or not re-relieved, or incurable, or In-patients made Out, or Out made In-patients, or the number of In and Out-patients dead — these particulars did not seem necessary for the comparison. This mode of treating the subject may, perhaps, be objected to, as not furnishing full and accurate results. To obviate this charge, and prevent the possibility of any

misconception, these particulars are given in the following table.

Particulars of the Out-patients discharged annually, from Midsummer 1822 *to Midsummer* 1827.

	Cured.	Relieved.	Own Desire.	Non-attendance.	Not Relieved.	Incurable.	Made Inpatients.	Dead.
1823	971	488	35	230	89	3	35	38
1824	986	432	51	198	89	2	38	32
1825	983	452	25	234	60	4	31	25
1826	913	466	37	292	79	3	40	26
1827	1408	702	47	397	118	2	34	38
	5261	2540	195	1351	435	14	178	159

Particulars of the Out-patients discharged annually, from Midsummer 1833 *to Midsummer* 1838.

	Cured.	Relieved.	Own Desire.	Non-attendance.	Not Relieved.	Incurable.	Made Inpatients.	Dead.
1834	909	241	31	260	35	5	50	28
1835	958	208	14	308	44	4	39	14
1836	961	195	22	282	38	9	53	23
1837	1059	229	22	434	30	7	75	16
1838	1282	265	31	464	27	5	65	25
	5169	1138	120	1748	174	30	282	106

Particulars of the In-patients discharged annually, from Midsummer 1822 *to Midsummer* 1827.

	Cured.	Relieved.	For Irregularity.	Own Desire.	Not Relieved.	Incurable.	Relieved. Made Out Patients.	Dead.
1823	293	68	6	8	7	0	316	16
1824	278	88	11	11	11	1	344	6
1825	305	109	7	28	12	0	326	15
1826	319	77	10	9	10	2	334	22
1827	417	121	9	18	9	2	407	31
	1612	463	43	74	50	5	1727	90

Particulars of the In-patients discharged annually, from Midsummer 1833 *to Midsummer* 1838.

	Cured.	Relieved.	For Irregularity.	Own Desire.	Not Relieved.	Incurable.	Relieved. Made Out Patients.	Dead.
1834	324	64	36	13	17	1	336	32
1835	363	59	35	18	8	2	359	28
1836	348	43	33	21	13	5	369	31
1837	364	60	38	28	11	4	421	77
1838	337	48	33	21	10	0	452	49
	1736	274	175	101	59	12	1937	217

Total of the Out-patients discharged under these heads, from 1822 *to* 1827.

Cured.	Relieved.	Own Desire.	For Non-attendance.	Not relieved.	Incurable	Made In-patients.	Dead.
5261	2540	195	1351	435	14	178	159

Total of the Out-patients discharged from 1833 *to* 1838.

5169	1138	120	1748	174	30	282	106

Total of the In-patients discharged under these heads, from 1822 *to* 1827.

Cured.	Relieved.	For irregularity.	Own Desire.	Not Relieved.	Incurable	Relieved & made Out-patients.	Dead.
1612	463	43	74	50	5	1727	90

Total of the In-patients discharged from 1833 *to* 1838.

1736	274	175	101	59	12	1937	217

Dr. Ernest, the House Surgeon, in answer to our inquiries respecting the abuses of the Infirmary, has kindly furnished us with the following remarks: "A frequent and formidable abuse is the admission

of improper objects, in which number Irish labourers and tramps form a large proportion. In general they are exceedingly ragged and filthy, requiring food, clothing, and rest, much more urgently than physic; and hence their wants ought to be relieved by the parish, and not by a medical charitable institution. Their admission necessarily excludes our own sick poor, which must be regarded as a serious evil. My further remarks will properly come under the three following heads:—

1. "It is a common practice with this class of persons when destitute and without any means of support, to procure, as soon as they arrive in the town, recommendations to be made In-patients.

2. "Many of them after having been treated with kindness and attention for weeks, conduct themselves in a very disorderly manner, manifesting anything but gratitude. When they feel sufficiently recruited, or desire to take their departure, they frequently leave clandestinely, without returning the slightest acknowledgment of thanks. When they fail in their application to be made In-patients, they often throw away the medicines they have received on leaving the Institution.

3. "The truly wretched and miserable appearance of the Irish not only excites commiseration, but is

apt to produce the impression that they are fit and legitimate objects of medical charity. Those who come to this conclusion forget that their necessities have a greater claim on the parish than on the limited resources of an Institution supported by voluntary subscriptions."

In referring to the published reports of the Dispensary we find the same gross neglect and ingratitude, and, indeed, to the greatest extent *when trade was in the most flourishing condition.* This is an interesting fact, and one of which we shall make use in our reflections on the causes of the evil. The number of patients reported cured by the Dispensary, from July 1835 to July 1836, was 1364; the number relieved, 153; the number discharged for non-attendance, 561. This is a greater proportion than any furnished by the published Reports to which we have adverted. Here one-fourth only of the patients cured or relieved failed to thank the Institution or the person who kindly presented the recommendation.

These are melancholy illustrations of ingratitude to stand recorded on the books of a medical charity. The gift of medicines, advice, and frequently attendance at their homes, is not, it appears, a boon sufficiently valuable to draw from the hearts of the

benefited the humble meed of a grateful acknowledgment. And all this apathy and indifference, it must be remembered, has increased with the exertions of the benevolent to relieve the reputed miseries of the working classes, by the establishment of mechanic institutions, mechanic libraries, infant schools, additional medical charities, and by liberal donations in times of distress. These stubborn and irrefragable facts clearly show that the labours of the benevolent do not educe the good which is contemplated; and we will venture to predict that the good will diminish with the increased zeal to relieve the operative. The great evil lies in doing for him what he ought to be forced to do for himself. He is taught not to depend on his own exertions but on those of others.

The extraordinary amount of irregularity in patients is by no means a problem difficult of solution. The causes of it are well understood. Charity has been liberal, but indiscriminate in its gifts. A great proportion of its objects have been the well-fed and well-paid artisans, and not the truly miserable and necessitous of society. These are seldom ungrateful. The former cannot possibly be expected to be otherwise, because what has been gratuitously conferred their own means were sufficiently ample to purchase. This feeling of ability cannot co-exist with an intense

sentiment of gratitude. The one is altogether alien to the other. Many of the In-patients dismissed from the infirmary for irregularity were discharged for insolence and disobedience to the rules of the establishment. They were unwilling to submit to salutary restrictions. Low diet, interdiction against smoking, or the limits of the ground for exercise, are regarded as hardships.

The irregularity of the Out-patients arises from the circumstance previously mentioned. They are ungrateful because they are not necessitous. Of the truth of this position, no one is better capable of judging than the House Surgeon of the Establishment. His long residence of above forty years enables him to compare past and present times, and hence his opinion on any important matter connected with the Institution is particularly valuable. We addressed to him the following questions which he kindly and promptly answered.

1. What has been the number of Out-patients annually for the last ten years.

2. What has been the number of In-patients for the same period?

3. Do the patients appear as poor and necessitous as they did ten or twenty years ago?

4. Are the Irish frequent applicants to be In-

patients? What proportion do you think they bear to the rest of the medical cases?

His answers are as follows:—

1. "The average number of Out-patients annually for the last ten years is 2,480.

2. "The average number of In-patients for the same period, 870.

3. "The character and appearance of the patients generally are very different from what they were fifteen or twenty years ago. The patients are much more respectably dressed, and in better circumstances. Many now, not from inability to walk, are conveyed to the house in hackney coaches. There is, also, another striking difference between the applicants of present and past times. They apply now for much more trivial ailments than formerly.

4. "The Irish are frequent applicants to be In-patients, but it is difficult to say what proportion they usually bear to the rest of the medical cases. Perhaps about one-fifth. There are now seventy-one patients in the house, twelve of whom are Irish. The number occasionally is much greater."

These answers establish two important facts;—the greater respectability of the patients, and their application for comparatively slight complaints. Many of them are as well dressed, particularly females,

as the middle classes of society. They visit the Institution in elegant cloaks, shawls, and clogs. A person unacquainted with their object would never imagine that they were recipients of charity. He would naturally expect to find ill clad and miserable looking creatures, and at least an appearance of indigence and distress. This, however, is far from being the case with one half of the applicants. The frequency with which they apply for very trifling ailments, such as slight symptoms of indigestion, coughs, or occasional pain, or indeed for the removal of disease which just perceptibly mars the beauty of the face or neck, is evidence that their situation in life is very remote from those circumstances which entitle them to the sympathy of the benevolent. *The really poor never apply for the relief of slight or unimportant complaints.* That degree of refinement and comfort which renders these objects of solicitude is not possessed by them. The finer sensibilities of the soul are quickly deadened by poverty, and cannot exist in habitual indigence. We object not to patients on the ground that their diseases are trivial. The fact is adduced as establishing the comparative respectability of the applicants.

To prove the injurious effects of medical charities in this town, arising from their abuse, we shall

analyze the circumstances of a hundred patients, not selected in order to present the evil in its most aggravated form, but taken indiscriminately on each day of admission for several weeks past at the Infirmary. The several classes into which the hundred are divided are as follows:—

1. Single men and past the age of twenty-one ...	15
2. Persons married but without family ...	11
3. Persons having from one to two children ...	32
4. Persons having three children	6
5. Servants in place	7
6. Persons having four children	10
7. Widows	7
8. Single women in no permanent situation ..	2
9. Persons having five or six children	4
10. Apprentices	2
11. Persons having seven or eight children ...	2
12. Widowers	2
	100

Some of these particulars afford matter for serious reflection. We will for a moment direct attention to the fifteen single men. We have already expressed an opinion that these ought not to be relieved except under peculiar circumstances. If they have been ill long and have exhausted their resources, or if they have had no employment for a considerable period, they are proper objects, but certainly not otherwise. To relieve them is to perpetuate habits of intemperance. We ascertained that thirteen out of the

fifteen had worked to the period of their illness, which was recent; three were shoemakers, three pen-knife cutlers, one table-knife cutler, one slab-cutter, one in a warehouse, one file cutler, one a scissor maker and worked for his father, one a labourer on the railway, and one a slater in business for himself.

These individuals can have no claim on the Institution. If they have failed to provide against the day of sickness, it has not arisen from the want of means, but from gross neglect or dissipation. A provision for the future has never entered largely into their views, nor is the necessity of it likely to be felt as long as the blessings of charity are indiscriminately extended to them. Why should they think of the future if they experience none of the disadvantages of a disregard to forethought?

To give them a higher tone of moral feeling, to elevate them in the scale of society, is unquestionably the wish of the enlightened philanthropist, but his liberality, if not judiciously exercised, will tend to perpetuate the vices and misery which he laments. They will gain wisdom by *feeling* the error of their ways in the abridgment of comforts or necessaries in the hour of distress. The perception of the evil in the distance, unless thus practically taught, will never be lively nor permament. Nearly two-thirds

of these patients were admitted into the house, and some of the others made application, assigning as a reason, that they would be much more comfortable than at home. Several were members of sick-clubs, and had given notice of their situation, so that whilst they were maintained by the charity and afforded every proper indulgence, they were at the same time receiving ten shillings a week from the club.

This is not at all an unusual occurrence, but it is wrong to permit it under these circumstances. They ought either to take the money and maintain their independence, or leave it for some more urgent occasion, and rest satisfied with the benefits of the charity. They have a right to the funds to which they have subscribed, but this right implies an obligation to use them as they would the fruits of their labour in purchasing the necessaries and comforts of life. To receive them and live upon charity is a melancholy instance of moral degradation. To admit the single indiscriminately on the books of the Institution will lead to serious consequences, which at present are only just perceptible. The stringent application of the Poor Laws will force the single and the married without families into the Infirmary, not in sickness only, but even in health, when trade is depressed. They will shun the parish, but they will crowd the portals

of an establishment that supplies all their wants without a question. The conversion of a charitable Institution supported by voluntary subscriptions into a Poor-house is easy, and now in a state of progression. We speak from a knowledge of facts.

The evil is indeed inevitable, and will daily increase, unless the charity protect itself by laws much more restrictive than any at present in operation. The entrance must be narrowed and not enlarged. The prompt relief which is furnished to the single and the married without families takes away all incentives to enter sick societies.

The suggestions of independence, as a motive, weigh very little with the mass who are likely to be recipients of charity. They labour according to their necessities, and spend what they earn without a thought of to-morrow.

These observations apply as forcibly to those whose families are small. Thirty-two of the hundred cases are persons who have one or two children only. In some of these instances, the only child is a daughter eighteen or twenty years of age, who has never been allowed to go out to place, or to learn any business; in others a son apprenticed to his father, and both in regular employment. In one instance, where the wife was the patient, the daughter was in a warehouse,

and the son, a youth of fourteen years of age, was a day scholar in a respectable private academy in the town. The husband had received regularly twenty four shillings a week for the last twenty years.

Many of the thirty-two cases are even more flagrant instances of imposition on the charity. Ten of the hundred cases are stated to be persons who have four children. The circumstances of five of the ten were ascertained to be exceedingly good. In the first of the five cases the wife was the patient, two sons were apprentices in the town, the husband, a haft-presser, and in regular work. In the second the wife was the patient, three daughters were employed in the hair-seating business, the son, twenty-five years of age, in the scissor trade, the father in a warehouse, all the children were living at home. In the third, the wife was the patient; an only daughter, about twenty years of age, was at home; two sons, one twenty-five and the other twenty-three years of age, in constant employment; the former receiving fifteen and the latter twelve shillings a week; the third son was at the time an In-patient in the Infirmary; the husband was in constant employment at fifteen shillings a week; two sons and the daughter were living at home. In the fourth, where a daughter,

a girl of eighteen, was the patient, and in place; a daughter was married; one son was an apprentice in the town, the other was apprenticed to his father, a file cutter, and both in employment. Whilst the daughter was a patient on the charity, her brother at home became ill, and a physician was in regular attendance upon him. In the fifth, the wife was the patient; an only daughter was married; three sons, of the respective ages of twenty-three, twenty-four, and twenty-six, were single, and at home; one a painter, and two cutlers; the husband a stove-moulder, and in constant work.

We have no remarks to make on widows and women in no permanent situations. These are true objects of charity, and it is to such we would freely extend its blessings. There are four persons in the hundred having five or six children. Three of these were entitled to apply for the benefits of the Institution; the fourth decidedly not. The wife was the patient, the husband had two sons, of the ages of seventeen and nineteen, working with him, and one of eighteen was apprenticed out; a girl, and a boy aged twelve, were at home.

The most objectionable item is seven maid servants in place, and two apprentices. These have no claim, according to the rules of the Institution,

and yet they are frequent applicants. The servants are not generally among the poor and necessitous of their class, nor are they mostly resident with persons in humble or straightened circumstances. Three of the seven servants are exceedingly respectable in appearance, and are living with the gentry in the neighbourhood. The Institution, in this instance, is imposed upon to relieve the pockets of the opulent, and not the industrious and needy domestic. Their claim is not upon the charity, but upon their employers. As long as they endeavour to perform their duty, they have a claim upon their indulgence and sympathy, and it is ungenerous to withhold them. If unequal to their duties, and thrown upon their friends, or their own limited resources, they then become deserving objects, and entitled to participate in all the benefits of the Institution, but not otherwise.

This departure from the rules is accompanied with a moral effect, of greater importance to society than the misapplication of the funds. As already stated, by such conduct we are teaching the first injurious lesson of asking charity. We are breaking down the bulwarks not only of independence and a proper feeling of pride, but, indeed, the outposts of virtue itself. The mind is trained to look down,

and this is always at the expense of those fine and delicate perceptions of propriety, which cannot be too carefully cultivated. The precincts of a charity have a deadening influence on its numerous and hungry expectants. Physical evils may be alleviated, but the high-toned morality of the mind is lowered.

Apprentices are frequently sent to the Institution. Two instances of this kind have just come under our notice. One is at present in the house, and the others we objected to on the ground that the master was able to maintain him.

The method adopted to show how extensively this charity is abused has been, to take indiscriminately a large number, and then to examine carefully the condition of the individuals composing it. We might have selected particular and glaring cases of abuse, but as the best managed institutions are liable to be at times imposed upon, this would not have afforded any satisfactory proof of the facts we wish to exhibit, viz., *the alarming extent of the evil, and its demoralizing influence upon the minds and habits of the humbler classes of society.*

We pass now to the examination of the condition and circumstances of the patients at this moment in the house. They are worthy of attention. The

abuses to which the charity is liable in this instance differ in some degree from those to which we have adverted in connection with Out-patients. Their too great respectability is by no means the prominent objection. The other extreme, utter destitution, is equally open to animadversion. The charity is to furnish medical and surgical assistance, and not to afford an asylum to the poor, unemployed or idle, whose chief wants are the necessaries of life. The object is to do good in a particular way, and the mode is clearly defined. It is only by circumscribing the stream of benevolence within its appropriate channels that the conditions of human suffering contemplated in the establishment of the Institution can meet with due attention and effectual succour. The indiscriminate relief of the distressed leads to evils not less injurious than its distribution to persons who have no claim, from the comparative ease and comfort of their circumstances. It opens the door to lying, hypocrisy, deceit, and idleness. Complaints of little importance are exaggerated into serious maladies, to suit the convenience of the moment. Chronic diseases which admit of no cure, and scarcely any amelioration, press on the charity, when work is scarce, or out-door labour is interrupted by the severity of the

season. And how often, indeed, are diseases feigned, when rest, lodging, and food only are wanted! Many, when foiled in their attempts to be made In-patients, are insolent and abusive, and scruple not to acknowledge that their want is not physic, but food and lodging.

In confirmation of this fact, which is notorious, we may mention what has fallen under our observation to day.* Seven persons applied to be In-patients, but two only were admitted; four of the five were rejected by us, presenting no clearly defined maladies, or such as required particular attention. The offer of advice without the privilege of remaining in the house was at once refused by three; the reason assigned being, that they were single men, and had no homes nor any means of living. Of this we were fully aware, and advised them to apply to the workhouse. The fifth was a fever case, and therefore inadmissible. The whole five had received recommendations from the individual to whom we have already alluded, as furnishing one third of the patients. One of the two cases admitted was a person fifty years of age, a table-knife-hafter. He had three children, two sons and one daughter, one son was married; the other, a youth of eighteen,

* January 28, 1839.

was working for him; a girl, thirteen years of age, was at home. On inquiry, it was found he had been three times an In-patient; he was a member of a sick-club, and had given notice to it the day previous to applying for medical relief.

The question may, perhaps, be asked, why admit him? The answer is, we were tired of rejecting: the exercise of this discrimination is accompanied with too great responsibility to be frequently repeated by medical officers; their duty is to prescribe, and not to examine and determine on the claims of the applicants. The Infirmary, unless protected by laws much more restrictive than any in operation, will gradually lose its original character, relieving, which it does largely, necessities belonging to the Parish or the Poor-house.

There are at present seventy-seven In-patients; twenty-one are women, and forty-six are men, seven children, and three apprentices; which may be classified as follows:—

In the first place, Single Men	19
2dly, Single Women	6
3rdly, Persons married, but without family	11
4thly, Men married, and patients, with one or two children	5
Carried forward ...	41

Brought forward ...	41
5thly, Women married, and patients, with one or two children	5
6thly, Persons married, with three children	6
7thly, Persons married, with four children ...	3
8thly, Persons married, with five or six children ...	2
9thly, Persons married, with seven children ...	1
10thly, Widows	4
11thly, Widowers	5
12thly, Apprentices	3
13thly, Children, Patients	7
Total ...	77

The occupations of the 46 men are as follows:—

Labourers	16	Brought forward ...	35
File Cutters	3	Engine Keeper	1
Tanners	2	White Metal Smiths ...	2
Cutlers	5	Farmer	1
Grinder	1	Roving Musician	1
Shoe-maker	1	Hawker	1
Brush-maker	1	Stone Mason	1
Die-sinker	1	Fishmonger	1
Striker in the making of carriage springs	1	Nail Maker	1
		Painter	1
Joiner	1	Fender Maker	1
Surgeons' Instrument-maker	1	Apprentices	3
Weaver	1	Children under fourteen years of age	7
Collier	1		
Carried forward ...	35	Total ...	56

In analyzing the circumstances of a hundred Out-

patients, nearly one-half were found to be single; or, if married, without families, or having only one or two children. The same conditions prevail in regard to In-patients. The single, the married without families, or having only one or two children, are a large majority. They are forty-three of the seventy-seven, in which latter number there are seven children and three apprentices; hence the proportion of those comparatively unincumbered to those who may be fairly presumed to be in adverse circumstances is as forty-three to twenty-four, being nearly as two to one.

Facts of this kind prove more clearly than any elaborate reasoning the thoughtless and profligate conduct of too many of the operatives, whose circumstances enable them to provide against the necessities of the future. The Institution is a convenience to individuals of this class. The single have no incumbrances to cause them to hesitate in taking up their abode within its walls, and hence it offers a temptation to such as are idle, broken down in constitution, or unemployed. The same remark applies almost with equal force to those whose family ties and claims are few. Many of the seventy-seven are proper objects for a Poor-house. Two of

the widows are at this moment receiving parish pay, and several other females are out of situations.

Married women without families can scarcely be regarded as legitimate objects, suffering from diseases exceedingly slight or unimportant in their nature, and which may effectually be treated at their homes, and yet how frequently are they admitted for debility, indigestion, or trifling affections. When cured they manifest no great anxiety to leave the house; many of them are particularly ingenious in finding out fresh pains or symptoms to arrest the attention of the medical attendant, especially when apprehensive of being discharged. It is sometimes politic not to inform them many days before, knowing that they can most successfully invent or feign new reasons for remaining. We have had several cases of this kind recently. One, a remarkably strong, muscular single woman, was abusive when she discovered that her ingenuity no longer availed her.

In evidence of the trifling nature of many of the medical cases, we may state that one half are often cured in ten days, and two-thirds in three weeks. The liability to imposition is greater among the men than the women; the former are affected by many circumstances which do not equally touch the latter, such as the scarcity of work, the inclemency of the

season interrupting out-door employment, and their frequently roving disposition. Many of the latter character apply for admission almost the moment they arrive in the town. There is seldom any necessity for them to feign disease. Its traces, the effects of intemperance and an irregular life, are too evident not to be at once perceived. They are seldom, however, proper objects for this Institution. The Poor-house is the place which ought to receive them. Among the forty-six adult male patients there are several of this kind; two are tanners with shattered constitutions; one is forty-three and the other is fifty-four years of age, both married, but without families. The others are a brush-maker, a hawker, and a tramping musician; the latter two are Irish, and, as is usual with their countrymen, married and have children, the one four and the other two. At this season of the year, and for several months, a large proportion of the applicants are persons employed in out-door work. It is a fact worthy of attention, that above one-third of the forty-six adult male patients are labourers, and ten of these are either single or without families.

There is another fact much more important, and deserving the most attentive and serious consideration, namely, *the rapidly increasing number*

of Irish applicants. We do not allude to them as improper objects. The fact is valuable in this relation, but much more in connection with the condition of their country, which, if permitted much longer to continue, will extend its demoralizing and pauperizing effects throughout the whole of England. To the consideration of this interesting subject we shall return. Ten of the forty-six adult male patients are Irish.

In evidence of the little forethought which is exercised by the working classes generally, it may be mentioned, that only two of the forty-six belonged to sick Societies. One had just given notice to his club, the other had not been sufficiently long a member to entitle him to relief. Three others had formerly belonged to Sick Clubs, which had become insolvent, as is too often the case. The frequency with which this occurs is a serious evil both to the immediate sufferers and to society at large. These are the institutions the benevolent ought to take under their especial care. A few pounds spent annually in encouraging and supporting them, would confer more real good than ten times the sum expended in indiscriminate acts of charity. They would teach, which is the tendency of well-timed and appropriate

benevolence, the poor to depend on their own exertions.

One of the patients is stated to be a farmer. He informed us that he rented land, and kept two cows and one horse. His position in society certainly does not entitle him to relief. He had a wife and three children, the eldest eleven years of age.

We have now completed a general analysis of the In-patients. A more minute investigation into their circumstances, or condition in life, is not necessary in order to point out the nature or extent of existing abuses; these are sufficiently manifest. In conclusion we would however briefly advert to a few of the more important, as especially worthy of consideration, such as the frequent admission of the single, and the married without families, not in cases of accident, but for the treatment of diseases which do not require this peculiar care and accommodation. These in the majority of instances should be made to struggle against their difficulties. They will gain by the exertion wisdom much more valuable than the advantages of misapplied benevolence. Individuals who have no fixed residence in the town or neighbourhood, and whose application is prompted by destitution, ought not to be admitted. Their wants, though urgent, have no claim upon the funds

of this Institution, but upon the Poor-house. Again, paupers ought to be regarded as improper objects; to extend to them the benefits is an imposition both upon the Charity and the Parish. The relief of their various necessities belongs to the latter only. It is scarcely necessary to insist on the palpable objection to apprentices, or the sons of persons in comfortable circumstances, and yet these occasionally trespass largely on the liberality of the Institution.

For several years past the annual subscriptions and the income from the funded and landed property of the Infirmary have been found altogether inadequate to cover the current expenses of the establishment. The deficiencies have been met by frequent and handsome legacies, but which, being incidental and not permanent resources, cannot possibly be calculated upon for the future. If they fail, one of two results is inevitable, the gradual absorption of the funds, or a diminution of the usefulness of the charity proportionate to its limited means. It is questionable whether both be evils. The latter would indeed be a serious one; it does not, however, necessarily follow from the former.

Charities are seldom liable to great abuses when depending on the sympathies and liberality of contemporary benevolence. The transmitted bounty of

past generations is fraught with no accompanying watchfulness or anxiety. It is dealt out, as mankind are apt to deal with the property of others, the value of which has not been taught by the difficulty or labour of acquiring it, with a liberal and thoughtless hand. Reflection comes when the stream grows small and feeble, and seldom before. We cannot for a moment imagine that the flagrant abuses exposed in the foregoing details could have accumulated to their present enormity if the Institution had been supported by contemporary benevolence only; nor will we insult the generous feelings of the age, by supposing that the necessities of humanity would have been inadequately provided for under such circumstances. Man responds to the appeals of his fellow-man according to the urgency of his wants. They are bound to each other by ties and sympathies, which are laws impressed upon the heart by the Deity himself, and on these we may rest, without a doubt or misgiving. The spring of charity is perennial in its flow, and gushes with a force proportionate to the demands and claims which are made upon it. To depend chiefly on the bequested donations of the dead is to call in question all that is good, and great, and noble, in human nature. The past ought to encourage a

dependence on the present and the future. Entertaining these views, the gradual absorption of the permanent funds is not regarded as a serious evil. It is questionable, indeed, if it would not lead to much good. Existing abuses would be corrected with a firm and determined hand, enlisting at the same time the sympathies and co-operation of the benevolent. The board-room would exhibit weekly the attendance of active and zealous spirits, keenly alive to the interests of the establishment. The way in which important business now devolves on a few shows that there is something unhealthy in the relation between the charity and the public. Diminished subscriptions, and the exposure of gross abuses, will force on general attention the necessity of a thorough reform. The Institution cannot otherwise continue to exist. The confidence and support of the public cannot be secured on any other terms.

Before proceeding to suggest remedies for the abuses pointed out, it is our duty to direct inquiry into the circumstances of the Dispensary patients. The inadequacy of the Infirmary to supply the necessities of the poor was first strongly expressed in 1831, and so generally was the feeling entertained, that extensive arrangements were made for opening

the Dispensary in 1832. This became at once an efficient and popular charity. The medical officers were gentlemen of superior attainments and practical skill. The number of patients admitted on the books, the first year, was 2921. If these were proper objects, the demand for further medical relief was as urgent as it was forcibly represented. The committee, in their report, state, apparently in order to account for this immense number of patients, "that the past year was a period of uncommon sickness: perhaps disease never existed to nearly the same extent in this neighbourhood as during the last twelve months. We have had the pestilential cholera, and the wide spreading influenza." The inferences which this statement naturally suggests are, that the Institution had conferred incalculable benefits; and still further, that the demands upon it would decrease with the diminution of disease. The committee could not possibly anticipate that during comparatively healthy seasons, or times of commercial prosperity, the same amount of charity would be required; and yet what are the facts?

From July 1832 to July 1833, the number of patients treated was	2,921*
Ditto 1833 to July 1834, ditto ...	2,891

* These numbers include the medical, surgical, and midwifery patients.

From July 1834 to July 1835, the number of patients treated was	2,691
Ditto 1835 to July 1836, ditto ...	2,888
Ditto 1836 to July 1837, ditto	2,705
Ditto 1837 to July 1838, ditto ...	3,099

The year succeeding the prevalence of cholera and the influenza afforded no substantial relief to the funds of the charity: there were only thirty patients less than during the most sickly period ever known. The three following years, 1834, 1835, and 1836, during which there were high wages and abundance of work, the greatest decrease in the number of patients in any one year was 330, *and in* 1836, *when trade was exceedingly good, only* 33.

These are curious and interesting facts. Do they not prove that the demand will always be equal to the existing means of supply? A taste for charity is created, and it will inevitably be gratified. Were the occasions of indulgence greatly enlarged, the feeling would grow in a geometric proportion. The only limits to its extension are deficient resources. The past year exhibits an increase on the first by 178 patients. The subscribers may rest assured that healthy seasons and times of prosperity will afford little, if any, relief to the funds. The application, which, at first, might be from necessity,

become a matter of course, in all cases of returning illness. We have been at considerable pains in taking down, indiscriminately, the names of a hundred patients, under the care of the physicians or surgeons of this Institution, and have inquired particularly into the circumstances of many. The results of our investigation and analysis are as follows : —

In the first place, Single persons	5
2ndly, Persons with one child ...	17
3rdly, Persons with two children	20
4thly, Persons married but without families ...	14
5thly, Persons with three children	15
6thly, Persons with four children ...	7
7thly, Persons with five children	4
8thly, Persons with six children ...	8
9thly, Persons with seven children	2
10thly, Persons with eight children ...	4
11thly, Persons receiving parish pay	4
Total ...	100

In our examination of the Out-patients of the Infirmary, the greatest number consisted of persons unmarried, or of married people with small families. The same facts again present themselves in the above table. Of the hundred patients,

5 are single.
17 with one child.
20 with two children.
15 with three children.
14 without families.

To account for this, it may, perhaps, be imagined, that the husbands were the patients, and consequently being unable to work, or to provide for their families, applied for medical relief. This, however, is far from being generally the case.

Of the 17 persons,	with one child,	the husbands,	patients, were	2
Of the 20 ditto,	with two children,	ditto,	ditto, ...	6
Of the 15 ditto,	with three children,	ditto,	ditto, ...	3
Of the 14 ditto,	without families,	ditto,	ditto, ...	6
66				17

There are then only seventeen of the sixty-six patients who are heads of families. The rest are the wives or children. The above supposition is, therefore, incorrect. The explanation of the fact has already been strongly insisted upon. Persons in these circumstances have not powerful incentives to exertion, nor, indeed, to practise rigid economy. They labour according to their necessities, and spend freely what they earn. A surplus of means is unknown, except as a preparation for some festive indulgence. The occupations of the seventy-one individuals are as follows: —

Persons with one Child.

1st. Caster	1	Brought forward ...	11
2nd. Shoe-makers	3	8th. Table-knife blade-forger.	1
3rd. Comb-maker	1	9th. Slater	1
4th. Labourers	3	10th. Penknife-grinders ...	3
5th. Matt-maker	1	11th. White-metal smith ...	1
6th. Cutler	1	12th. Pocket-knife-blade forger	1
7th. Sawyer	1		
Carried forward ...	11	Total ...	18

Persons with two Children.

1st. File cutters	2	Brought forward ...	13
2nd. White-metal smith ...	1	9th. Pocket-knife grinder ...	1
3rd. Razor-scale presser ...	1	10th. Button-maker	1
4th. Optician	1	11th. Cutler	1
5th. File-smiths	3	12th. Edge-tool-maker ...	1
6th. Plasterer	1	13th. Drover	1
7th. In the hair seating business	1	14th. Stamper in a silver-plated manufactory ...	1
8th. Labourers	3	15th. Shoe-maker	2
Carried forward ...	13	Total ...	21

Persons with three Children.

1st. Scissor-makers	3	Brought forward ...	10
2nd. Scissor-grinder ...	1	7th. File-makers	2
3rd. Labourers	2	8th. Master manufacturing cutler	1
4th. Penknife-cutlers ...	2	9th. Razor-blade-forger ...	1
5th. Optician	1	10th. Pocket-knife-blade-forger	1
6th. File-cutter	1		
Carried forward ...	10	Total ...	15

Persons without Families.

1st. Edge tool-maker ...	1	Brought forward ...	9
2nd. Scissor forgers	2	6th. File-makers	2
3rd. Shoe-makers	2	7th. Blacking-maker ...	1
4th. Table-knife grinders ...	2	8th. Pen-knife cutler ...	1
5th. Table-knife cutlers ...	2	9th. Joiner	1
Carried forward ...	9	Total ...	14

Single Persons.

		Brought forward ...	3
1st. Fender-maker	1	4th. Female, burnisher in sil-	
2nd. Shoe-maker	1	ver-plated manufactory...	1
3rd. Female, aged 22	1	5th. Female, dress-maker ...	1
Carried forward ...	3	Total ...	5

Very few of the seventy-one persons were out of work, and many belong to branches of manufactures which have afforded moderate employment during depressed times of trade. We ascertained that many of these individuals were in full work, and were capable of earning from twenty-five to thirty-five shillings per week. Several had apprentices, and, when cured, would send to say, they were quite well and had gone to work. This message being their only acknowledgment of thanks. Some of these, or their families, were visited almost daily at their

homes; which, in many cases are exceedingly comfortable, the houses being clean and well furnished. Our duty called us to a few, which had good beds with curtains, clocks in mahogany cases, and other articles to correspond with a condition of life very far indeed from destitution.

Such appearances are pleasing, but never so in connection with the habits of dependence on charity. The means which allow of such comforts should inspire a better, and a nobler feeling.

Dispensary patients, generally, are less respectably dressed than those of the Infirmary, and the former Institution presents fewer instances of gross imposition. It has nevertheless an ample share: we are often surprised at the well-dressed appearance of many of the patients; some are as neatly and comfortably attired as the middle classes of society; the severity and vicissitudes of this season of the year being duly provided against, in a tasteful manner, and at an expense indicating any thing but poverty and distress. To give an instance—a child six years of age, accompanied by its mother, came dressed in a silk pelisse, trowsers with a frill round the ankle, a fur round the neck, a cap with a neat and elegant border, and a bonnet of the same material as the pelisse: the family consisted of two

children, and the husband was in the edge-tool business, and in regular work.

These are not solitary instances; many other patients, though less gaudily attired, exhibit easy circumstances. It is not at all unusual for families to be at the same time on the books of both Institutions, or when discharged from one to go immediately to the other, and in this way, with few intermissions, they receive medical aid for years. A few weeks ago, a well-dressed woman came to the Infirmary on our admission-day with a recommendation for her daughter. As her countenance was somewhat familiar, it led to inquiries, and we found that she had then two children under our care at the Dispensary: the condition of the family had been previously ascertained to be good; the husband had full work in the first cutlery manufactory in the town, and the average of his wages was one pound ten shillings a-week. His employers, in answer to our personal inquiries, at once showed us the wages-book, and expressed surprise that his family should be recipients of medical charity; the recommendation they stated had not been given by them, which was the fact, for it had been procured from an individual before alluded to, who sends annually to this Institution about one-third of the patients.

The recommendations, in seven cases out of ten, are given by persons who have no knowledge whatever of the circumstances of applicants. A gentleman, who from his position in society is often applied to, informs us that he always refuses unless the individual bring a letter from his employer stating that he is a necessitous object, and though promising to give a recommendation on this condition, *not one in twenty returns to receive it.*

It would be tedious to enumerate cases of abuse, but we may mention two which came under our observation last week. In pursuing our enquiries, a well-dressed child informed us that her father was a cow-keeper, kept two cows and one horse. A respectable looking woman stated that her family consisted of an only daughter, twenty years of age, at home, who had never been out to place, or taught any business; the husband was a pen-knife cutler, and in full work, where the finest articles only in this branch of manufactures are produced. In answer to our inquiries we found that the family had always employed a surgeon, whose standing, talent, and respectability are surpassed by none in the town.

But why enumerate particular cases? This is not the object of our investigation. The extent of ex-

isting abuses is not to be measured by the few instances here recorded, but rather by the results of the analysis by which a given number of patients have been tried. This has elicited facts which cannot fail to awaken the attention of the public. It has fully displayed the tendencies to imposition on medical charities, and in no instance more strikingly than in this, *that healthy seasons and prosperous times of trade are marked by no diminution of applicants.* We hesitate not to assert, that during the last twelve months there has been less disease in this town and neighbourhood than has been known for many years, and yet during this period the demands on medical charities have increased.

In answer to this it may be urged that trade has been bad, but we have shown that when manufactures were in the most flourishing condition, the results were much the same. This is a fact requiring no intricate examination to discover. The comparison of a few figures establishes its truth. Among the abuses connected with the Dispensary not the least is the allowing of servants and apprentices to be attended at the homes of their masters. No charity ought to be taxed for the benefit of the latter. The Surgeon of the Dispensary informs us he has attended servants at the houses of respectable

shop-keepers, such as drapers and ironmongers. This is a misapplication of the funds, and ought not to be permitted. In exposing the abuses of the Infirmary, we dwelt at great length on the irregularity of the patients, and the want of gratitude manifested by a large proportion in failing to return thanks. We have on this occasion to make the same complaints. The data on which they rest have been established with considerable difficulty and labour. Had we taken for our guide the printed reports of the Institution, the task would have been easy, but these afford no certain information. The number that ought to be put down as discharged for non-attendance is much greater than that which is stated. In speaking to the House Surgeon on the subject, he said it would be awful, or dreadful,—the exact expression we will not insist upon,—if all who ought to be recorded as discharged on this account were reported accordingly. There is a certain degree of sensitiveness naturally felt by medical practitioners on this matter.* We make no charges to which

* The following extract from an exceedingly useful and interesting annual publication presents a most extraordinary instance of imposition practised on the public and the subscribers to a charitable institution. "It behoves, I think, every friend of truth, and every real friend of our public

we do not ourselves plead guilty. The medical attendants prefer seeing such items as "*cured*" or "*relieved*" in their books in place of "*discharged for non-attendance;*" and as they recollect that many of the cases when last seen by them were greatly relieved or nearly convalescent, such are generally reported under these particular heads. This procedure consequently makes the number discharged for non-attendance considerably less than it really is. The same sensitive feeling is displayed in the printed reports. There is often a foot-note referring to the number dismissed for non-attendance.

One of these notes is as follows:—"*Many of these were doubtless cured. It is a common practice with patients, as soon as they find themselves decidedly convalescent, to discontinue their visits to the Dispensary, so that their medical advisers have not an opportunity of knowing that they are cured.*"*

charities to oppose himself stedfastly to all unfair dealing with the public; which, wrong at all times, is, in the present day, neither politic nor safe. And yet a few years since, when the Rev. Charles Oxendon was engaged in procuring materials for his well-contrived, elaborate, and in the highest degree useful, 'Statistical Table of the Hospitals,' he found that at one large provincial hospital all the out-patients *dead* were returned as *cured*. His attention was drawn to the point by remarking that according to their 'Annual Report,' *not one of their Out-patients died*. Truly, a public that could take in and digest this, might be expected to swallow any thing." *The Medical Annual or British Medical Almanac*, p. 191.—1839.

* *The Sixth Annual Report of the Sheffield Public Dispensary*, 1838.

This admission is full of truth, but unfortunately does not agree with the printed statement. In the report in which this occurs, the number discharged as cured and relieved is nearly 2,000, whilst those discharged for non-attendance are only 172, which certainly does not prove negligence and indifference on the part of patients. It is in this instance the exception, and not the practice. We shall, however, show that it is the prevailing custom, and not the exception. The following particulars will fully establish the fact:—

December 10*th*, 1838.

Patients Admitted during the week	42
Ditto Discharged	36
Remaining on the Books	699
The number who returned thanks	17

December 17*th*.

Patients Admitted during the week	35
Ditto Discharged	13
Remaining on the Books	721
The number who returned thanks	9

December 24*th*.

Patients Admitted during the week	32
Ditto Discharged	21
Remaining on the Books	732
The number who returned thanks ...	6

January 2nd, 1839.

Patients Admitted during the week	29
Ditto Discharged	30
Remaining on the Books	731
The number who returned thanks ...	15

January 9th.

Patients Admitted during the week	53
Ditto Discharged	12
Remaining on the Books	772
The number who returned thanks	9

January 16th.

Patients Admitted during the week	46
Ditto Discharged	108
Remaining on the Books	710
The number who returned thanks	16

During these six weeks the number of patients discharged was 220. The number who returned thanks 72. Hence it is evident, that not one in three, made any acknowledgment for the benefits received. The proportion, however, is considerably less than is here stated. The 220 contain two descriptions of patients. The one attended the Institution more or less regularly, and on being dismissed, cured, or relieved, were requested to return thanks; the other visited the Charity until perhaps cured or relieved, but abruptly discontinued their attendance.

Under the head "*discharged*" both classes of patients are included, nor is it necessary for the practical purposes of this inquiry to separate them. Ingratitude and indifference are strongly marked by both. The latter class, however, is much more numerous than may appear in the returns of any two or three months.

At the end of the year, there are several hundreds belonging to it who are reported, but incorrectly, as under medical treatment. The rule in all such institutions, in regard to patients, is, that if they fail to visit their respective medical attendants once in three weeks they are discharged for non-attendance.

In our inquiry into this matter, we took the range of a month to determine the number of patients in actual attendance, leaving out of consideration such patients as were admitted during this period.

On December 27th, 1838, 732 patients were stated to be on the books of the charity, by which, of course, is implied that they were in regular attendance. We were convinced, previous to the investigation, that this was a gross and serious error, and one with which the public ought to be made thoroughly acquainted. The names of the patients,

their residences, and the times which they attended during the month were accurately recorded. An analysis of the medical cases furnished the following facts:—

The Patients who visited the Charity once only during the whole month were		... ...	27
Ditto	do.	twice	30
Ditto	do.	three times ...	28
Ditto	do.	four times	21
Ditto	do.	five times ...	11
Ditto	do.	six times	2
Ditto	do.	seven times ...	2
Ditto	do.	eight times ...	1
			122

The Surgical patients who visited the Charity once only during the month were		... ...	46
Ditto	do.	twice	20
Ditto	do.	three times ...	17
Ditto	do.	four times ...	13
Ditto	do.	five times ...	10
Ditto	do.	six times ...	5
Ditto	do.	seven times ...	5
Ditto	do.	eight times ...	2
			118

So that of 732 patients on the books, 240 only were in actual attendance, leaving 492 who ought to have been dismissed for irregularity.* This number is gradually, and sometimes sweepingly lessened,

* It is calculated, that about sixty patients would be attended at their homes during the month, of whom we have taken no account, and consequently this number is to be added to the 240.

to make room for others of the same class, who, in their turn, are similarly discharged; the majority as cured or relieved, though the result of the cases is never ascertained. If the inquiry had been restricted to three weeks, a period sufficiently long to test the attendance of patients, the number would of course have been less than 240. These facts are striking, but painful, illustrations of irregularity and ingratitude in the recipients generally of Medical Charity. They are here shown to be too idle or too indifferent to return thanks to the Board, to the Medical Officers, or to the Recommenders!

Let the benevolent who give without reflection deeply weigh these facts. They afford matter for serious thought. In exposing these errors, no blame is attached, nor is any to be ascribed to the talented House-Surgeon of the Charity. It is neither in his power nor is it his province to correct the evil. This is not the fault of an individual, but is indeed interwoven in the system, or rather in the want of system, order, and judgment too extensively characterizing the government of such institutions. They abound in abuses and flagrant acts of ingratitude. To ascertain the proportion of Irish applicants at the Dispensary we addressed the following questions to the House-Surgeon, which he kindly answered.

1. Can you form any idea what proportion the Irish bear to the rest of the patients?

2. Of the patients who require to be visited at home, do the Irish form a large proportion?

Answer. 1. Rather more than one-eighth.

2. Of 400 patients visited at home, fifty-eight were Irish.

In his accompanying remarks he says, "The Irish applicants are generally in destitute circumstances. I am at present attending three, whose homes are scenes of wretchedness that could not be surpassed by anything in Ireland. It is often necessary to insist on their going into the workhouse, simply for protection from cold and hunger." The rapidly increasing demand of the Irish for medical relief is a circumstance to which we shall advert in subsequent reflections. The nature and extent of the evil are only partially understood.

Having entered most fully into the examination of the abuses to which medical charities are liable, it now becomes our duty to endeavour to suggest remedies calculated to correct them. This part of the undertaking is beset with no ordinary difficulties; since there are various and complicated interests to consult, and the remedies ought not, in any degree, to diminish the usefulness of either charity. The

really deserving and necessitous should have every facility and advantage afforded them, and at the same time there should be impediments and checks to prevent the encroachments of those who do not strictly belong to this class. The benefits conferred are not, as previously remarked, to be estimated by the amount of human suffering alleviated, *but the amount which could not otherwise be promptly relieved.* This is the only principle on which to form a correct judgment. If the remedies proposed be exceedingly restrictive, the subscribers may perhaps imagine that their privileges and influence are improperly abridged. We have no apprehension that this objection will be urged by the many. The guardians of charitable institutions are invested with a sacred and important trust, in the exercise of which all classes of the community are interested. The evils resulting from their abuse have not a temporary and local influence only. They are permanent and general. They affect the whole texture of society. The only protective means at present against their growth and prevalence are the Board-room, and the discrimination of Subscribers, which are altogether inefficient. The Board-room at the Infirmary is, we grieve to say, most lamentably inattentive to its duty. The chairman is regular in attendance, and indefatigable in

his exertions, but the interests of a large establishment cannot possibly be managed by one, how talented or industrious soever he may be. The general and urgent business of the house leaves no time to inquire into minor but important matters. So indifferent is the weekly attendance, that it is not at all unusual to request the presence of the medical officers, engaged in the admission of patients, to form a quorum, which is five, in order to transact business.

Is this a healthy and vigorous state of a charitable institution? Are the benevolent, who liberally contribute their aid, too idle or too indifferent to superintend its application? Do they imagine that charity is refreshing and beneficial to all on whom it indiscriminately alights? If this be the impression on their minds, it is founded in error. The distribution of such charity may be justly likened to artificial heat employed in hot-houses, requiring nice and delicate adjustment, the too parsimonious or liberal use of which is equally detrimental.

It is difficult to express, in adequate terms, our astonishment at such inattention and apathy. Those who set important machines in action are in duty bound to superintend their working, unless they can prove that their operations, like the wondrous inven-

tion of a Babbage, are guided by a principle more sure than reason. Establish this, and we will dispense with their services, but not otherwise. To speak the truth on this occasion is painful, but it is a duty, and we venture honestly and fearlessly to perform it; our motto being, *Fiat justitia ruat cœlum.* We are not partial in our castigation.

The mode in which recommendations are procured affords no security against imposition. On an average, two out of every three are given by persons to whom the circumstances of the applicants are almost entirely unknown. This observation may be startling, but it is true. We found that eleven only of thirty-three In and Out-patients, admitted in one day, were recommended by persons acquainted with their circumstances, and twenty-two by subscribers who knew nothing of them. A similar ratio was found to prevail on a succeeding day of admission. What security has society against imposition so long as this is permitted? A request to subscribers to exercise greater discrimination will never correct the evil. The advice has been repeated until it ceases to have any effect. One individual in particular was admonished on the subject in 1827, and frequently since, and yet he has persisted to act in defiance of all requests, and to an extent that is not to be parallelled

in the transactions of any charitable institution in the United Kingdom. Though a subscriber of only two guineas annually, it is calculated he has sent to the Infirmary, since 1827, at least 3000 Out-patients and 1000 In-patients. A few years ago it was ascertained that he recommended in one year 381 patients, eighty-one of whom were In-patients, which numbers being multiplied by eleven, afford pretty nearly these results. Had we taken the data furnished by the last three or four years, the estimate would have greatly exceeded what is here stated.*

Our objection is much less against the number recommended by him than the indiscriminate manner in which he dispenses the blessings and the funds of the Institution. If convinced that the applicants are worthy objects, why not secure a larger amount of privileges by an increased subscription? Great delicacy is always imposed on those who are giving that which is not their own, nor can the character for liberality be justly founded in exercising the rights, or distributing the means of others. He is visited by persons from all parts of the town. Beggars,

* For example, to-day, February 8th, the Medical and Surgical cases recommended by him were fourteen, which may perhaps be regarded as the average of his weekly recommendations; this, being at the rate of 728 patients per annum, would in eleven years amount to upwards of 8,000. About one half of the cases recommended by him are now for In-patients.

tramps, and the necessitous of all kinds, know where their pressing and general wants may be supplied.

We have stated, in the preceding pages, the conditions which ought to exclude from a participation in medical relief. We shall here briefly enumerate them, and the accompanying remarks are intended to apply to both Institutions.

1. Single men in employment have not the slightest claim.

2. The married operative in work with no family, or only a small one, is equally unentitled.

3. The operative receiving high wages, though he may have several children, cannot be regarded as necessitous.

4. The operative who has sons or apprentices working for him can establish no claim to relief.

5. Neither male nor female servants in place, and attending to their respective duties, nor apprentices whose masters are in good circumstances, are proper objects.

We have previously given our reasons for laying down these conditions, and, therefore, it is not necessary again to explain them. If it be urged that they are too restrictive, it must not be forgotten that the stream of charity is injurious if it flow to any but

the really necessitous. It exerts a paralyzing and debasing influence on all others. Again, the objector must bear in mind that the demands on both charities are very inadequately met by annual contributions, and there is little prospect that the one will ever permanently be made commensurate with the other. The demands have become morbidly great and absorbing, and consequently, like all unnatural appetites, require extraordinary supplies which do not exist, nor can they easily be calculated upon.

At this moment there is an active canvass in the town for additional subscriptions in aid of the Dispensary, the current expenses of which for the last five years have very much exceeded the income. These zealous and benevolent exertions will undoubtedly create larger deficiencies than at present exist. The consequent increase of tickets will augment the number of applicants, and we may also venture to assert that the tendency to imposition will also be greatly aggravated. This result is inevitable from the cheapening of charity. The greater facility of procuring recommendations will enable persons to take advantage of them who have hitherto maintained their independence.

A striking instance, in illustration of this truth, came under our observation a very short time ago. We were requested to visit a patient in the town whom

we found to be an operative in full employ, and living in a clean and comfortably furnished house. He was in bed, but had worked on the day we saw him. He was a fine, strong, muscular man, about thirty-five years of age, suffering from what is usually called lumbago; the pulse was full, regular, and, in all respects, natural. There was no heat of skin, or the slightest disturbance of the system generally. He admitted that he ailed nothing except pain across his loins, which had affected him about a week, though not so severely as to cause any interruption to his daily exertions. After having satisfied ourselves of the nature of his disease, to our surprise he stated that he was on the point of sending for his Surgeon, but a person to whom he mentioned his case at once offered a recommendation to the Dispensary, and thus we had the honour of being consulted as one of its Officers.*

* The following case shows to what extent abuses may grow in charitable institutions. A gentleman who has a considerable estate contiguous to a Dispensary held by a medical acquaintance of mine subscribed three guineas per annum, and gave a friend residing near it authority to recommend his tenants, many of whom are of the class which may be justly denominated "wealthy farmers." His friend was not slow in availing himself of his privilege, and gave recommendations without distinction of wealth or circumstances, to the great annoyance of the Surgeon (who, at first, was afraid to remonstrate), and with considerable injury to the charity, whose funds were scarcely sufficient for the sick poor of an extensive and dense, though a rural population. Several so recommended had fifty, sixty, and some a greater

Here is an instance of an individual applying for charity, not from necessity, but from the facility presented of procuring for nothing what he had been accustomed to pay for. The disgrace of the act caused no hesitation or unpleasant reflection. The mind of the mass is not sufficiently refined in its tone, nor elevated in its views, to be so far influenced by the feeling as to forego the advantage presented. The frequent example of others takes away all acutely sensitive feelings or "compunctious visitings." The increase of subscribers will unquestionably have the effect here stated. It is indeed equivalent to the establishment of another charity, which, in whatever part of the town situated, would be crowded with applicants. Were the additional subscribers debarred from exercising any privileges, their contributions might extricate the Institution from its difficulties, and maintain it in a healthy and vigorous condition; but clearly not otherwise. The difficulties have arisen from relief having been afforded to a greater number

number of acres of land, and had all the appearances of wealth and comfort. The medical officer at length remonstrated, pointed out the injustice of the practice both to the Institution and to himself; and requested that there should be no consideration respecting his time and trouble as far as paupers, or even a class somewhat above paupers were concerned, but that the farmers should not be recommended. He was informed that "Mr.—— had subscribed, and that all his tenants were entitled to advice and medicines, and let him refuse to give either at his peril."—*A Statistical Inquiry into the present state of the Medical Charities of Ireland*, p. 197. by Denis Phelan, *Dublin*, 1835.

of patients than the existing funds are able to support. Is it not, therefore, evident that the exertions made to augment the resources are at the same moment increasing the demands upon them? If, from a given amount of subscriptions, two thousand patients are entered annually on the books, it will scarcely be denied that an increase in the amount of contributions will be accompanied with a proportionate increase of patients. The one is a necessary effect of the other. We may, therefore, rest assured that these benevolent exertions will not permanently relieve the Institution. They have failed on previous occasions.

There is one circumstance connected with them too important in its influence to be entirely overlooked. The supporters, generally, of charitable institutions should be placed in a highly respectable and independent position in society, to exercise with discrimination and judgment the privileges with which they are invested.* When they descend below a certain

* The following instance of gross abuse, among many others, is given in the work just referred to. "I understand it is a common practice with shop-keepers to give farmers and other unfit persons recommendations to Dispensaries on their having made purchases of goods from them. In many places they subscribe ten shillings or more to enable them to carry on this traffic, which more than recompenses them for the sum subscribed, as in most institutions there is no limitation in respect to the number which each subscriber can recommend. The Physician to a Dispensary lately informed me that he had been obliged a few days before to visit a very

standard, which it would be invidious to define, the recommendations are less likely to fall into the hands of truly deserving objects. Extraordinary efforts to increase the funds will certainly have a tendency to create a class of subscribers whose condition in life is not sufficiently independent to secure those advantages essential to the proper distribution of charity. It will scarcely be doubted that one of the present laws of the Institution holds out a temptation to persons to become subscribers, which is certainly not always resisted, and if generally known would be much more seductive in its influence. We allude to the regulation which allows servants and apprentices to be attended at the homes of their masters. Here is an inducement for persons to subscribe, not from a truly benevolent feeling, but for the purpose of affording medical relief to their dependents, which should otherwise be supplied by themselves. If such conduct were general, what would become of the really poor and necessitous! How small would be the stream of charity which would flow to them!

The difficulty of procuring resources, adequate to

comfortable person at a distance of some miles on a recommendation so obtained. I once had the curiosity to ascertain the number of recommendations given by three shop-keepers in this town (who give dispensary "tickets" freely), and I found that these three, one or two of whom were only contributors of 10s. 6d. per year, recommended more than one half the patients for the whole period, though there are about 160 subscribers."

the current demands of this Institution, will certainly enforce the necessity of reform, in some degree, according to the principles which are here laid down. If the conditions press hardly on the class particularized, how much more heavily will the want of medical aid press on those miserable objects much lower in the scale of comforts. The consideration ought to be for these and these only.

Conjointly with such restrictive conditions, we have a plan to propose which will still further tend to prevent the growth of abuses. We would suggest the adoption of the following form of recommendation: —

1. Name, age, and residence.
2. Single or married. If married, what family under nine years of age?
3. Trade of the husband, father, or patient?
4. For whom does he work?
5. Name of the recommender.
6. The disease.

As no person, except in cases of accident, is admitted without a recommendation, the adoption of the printed form, or its conditions, should be insisted upon, so that the recommender would be compelled to analyze the circumstances of the applicant. The only additional trouble to which

he would be put, would be the necessity of making himself acquainted with the circumstances in the first five lines. He is supposed to perform this duty now, and we should then have evidence that he had performed it. The last line is of course left to be filled up by the medical officer.

As a further protection against imposition, we suggest the publication of these particulars in the newspapers of the town. The advertisement would neither be large nor expensive. The average number of lines required to exhibit the weekly admission at each Institution would be about forty. The particulars in the printed form of the recommendation might be easily placed for the convenience of publication in one line, divided into nine columns as follows:

Date.	Age.	Name.	Residence.	Single or married. If married, what children under 9 years of age?	Trade of the husband, father, or patient.	For whom does he work.	Name of the recommender.	Disease.

This would be the great check on the abuses. It would immediately test the worthiness of the objects for relief. The more respectable would shun the ordeal, and struggle to maintain their independence. Suppose the expense to be seventy or eighty pounds

per annum, this sum is a trifle compared with what is yearly expended in benefiting improper objects. The advertisement would, moreover, tend to secure the sympathy and liberal support of the public in favour of the charities. It would inspire confidence in the management of them. It would, perhaps, be advisable not to publish the disease. With this the public have no concern. Were this plan thoroughly carried out it would afford statistical information of great value. The influence of many circumstances on the condition of society would then be clearly understood, which, at present, is involved in much doubt and obscurity. On this subject our limits will not permit us to enlarge. The remedies here proposed have been deeply weighed, and have received the approval of persons fully capable of forming a correct opinion of their operation.

We cannot quit the examination of medical charities without briefly adverting to one class of applicants, a class which is yearly increasing. We allude to the Irish. The increase in all large manufacturing towns has of late been exceedingly great. Within the last twenty years, perhaps, nearly sevenfold. The data by which we are guided are not sufficiently accurate to admit of a just comparison, but this estimate is not far from the truth. The

calculation is materially assisted by taking into account the extraordinary increase, within this period, in the number of Catholic chapels, Schools, Ministers, and in the laborious duties which they have now to perform. Had we no other data than these, the above conclusion would be borne out by ample and satisfactory evidence.

In this town, twenty years ago, there was a small chapel frequented by several highly respectable families, but by few belonging to the operative classes. The Pastor was a man advanced in years, unequal to much exertion, but adequate to the ordinary duties of his situation. He was a good, pious, and charitable man. A few years after his decease the necessity for additional accommodation was strongly felt, and in consequence, a commodious chapel was erected. This, within the last twelve months, has been enlarged, and yet so great is the want of accommodation that Mass is performed twice on the Sunday, not to suit the convenience, but to meet the urgent demands of a numerous flock; and on these occasions, the attendance is frequently crowded. There are now two Ministers, and their duties are extremely laborious. There are other indications of rapid growth. A Catholic school has recently been

built, where the young of both sexes are taught on every day in the week.

Our business with these facts is in reference only to the increase of the Irish, for they are, to a large extent, the occasion of these progressive alterations. This we regard as an evil, though not on *religious* grounds. On these we presume not to express an opinion or to insinuate an inference. Our objections arise from a thorough knowledge of the degraded condition of the masses emigrating to this country. In this consists the evil, and its influence on society may be shown to be fruitful in consequences much more extensive and detrimental than has yet been contemplated. The subject has long been familiar to our thoughts; presenting, as it does, comprehensive and important relations to legislative measures, both civil and political, to our social and intellectual institutions, and to the wellbeing of the whole community. In these relations it has not, however, been studied, nor is it our intention, at this time, to do more than offer a few remarks, bearing on some of the questions discussed in the preceding pages.

The intellectual and social state of the masses depends greatly on the rate of wages. When these are permanently low, and yet liable to fluctuation,

ignorance, misery, and immorality, will generally prevail. The Irish, both in agricultural and manufacturing districts, are gradually diminishing the rewards of labour. Their necessities are urgent and easily supplied. Their ideas of comfort are low and grovelling. Unfortunately they are happy on too little. This trait in their character is often alluded to with approbation. We deplore it most sincerely.

There are few things more painful to contemplate than contentment in dirt, rags, and ignorance. It is the parent of a long train of evils,—early and improvident marriages, famished children, crimes, and want. The feeling stimulates to no exertion—it wings no aspirations to the future—it draws no hope from the past. The future and the past have no views to ennoble. The prospect of the one, and the retrospect of the other, are, like the present, a mere point on a dark ground. The gay-flitting colours of the morning life, and the rich, but the sober hues of evening, shed no light on this dull and meaningless point of existence.

Man is not born to eat and sleep only. He lives in a world abounding in beauty, design, and wisdom, and these were intended to call forth, and exercise, the finer susceptibilities of the soul. Con-

tentment in filth and wretchedness awakens, however, none of these! Intelligence excites emulation and enterprise, and, even in poverty and distress, its struggling efforts to attain a better state of things preserve a lingering taste for what is good and beautiful; the tendency of which is to purify the moral atmosphere, and to enlarge the horizon of the mind.

The contentment of the Irish indicates an exceedingly low state of mental culture. The strength of their feelings on particular subjects is no evidence of knowledge. Indeed the one is frequently in the inverse ratio of the other. The cruel necessities and hardships to which they are subject at home force the most needy, and perhaps the least worthy, to look abroad for the means of subsistence. We certainly cannot compliment them on possessing much that dignifies human nature. Their habits, their tastes, and their condition will scarcely bear reflection.

The depreciation of wages is a result to which their large and increasing immigrations will certainly lead. It is already partially produced, both in agricultural and manufacturing districts, and nothing but a radical improvement in the condition of Ireland will arrest or mitigate this growing and formidable

evil. If we fail to raise the Irish to our own standard of civilization and comfort, they will gradually and inevitably lower us to their own. The latter process is now in operation, and this circumstance alone makes a material difference in the susceptibility of the operatives in this country and those of Scotland or Prussia to the influence of educational systems. The mixture is unfavourable for the application of enlarged and comprehensive principles. The elements of which it is composed are not marked by those affinities or sympathies, or that unity of character, essential to the grasping and moulding of the whole. Imagination cannot even fuse them together. The constantly increasing demands of the Irish on the charitable institutions of this country are of course diminishing those funds which were originally intended for our own poor and necessitous.

We are fully aware that no distinctions of persons or nations were contemplated by the benevolent in the formation of these institutions, and far be it from us to make them. Suffering humanity admits of no such refinements. Though willing to acknowledge to the fullest extent this truth, we are at the same time sensible that institutions, when established, have, both in principle and mag-

nitude, a reference to the existing and probable wants of their own locality.

In the building of a Poor-house or an Infirmary, the anticipated inundations of the Irish are no element in the calculation. We plan, weigh, and subscribe according to present, and future necessities, as estimated by a knowledge of the past. The past, however, affords no data in respect of Irish claims, nor will the present when converted into past time. Of this we are certain, that such demands will become more urgent and numerous.

If this arose from the Irish occupying situations vacated by the gradual elevation of our own classes in the scale of intelligence, sobriety, and comfort, it would be a matter of congratulation: but such is not the case. It is not a demand for labour which regulates their immigration, but their want of employment at home. Extreme wretchedness and misery cast them upon our shores, destitute of every thing save cheerfulness and enduring patience. They are beggars from the moment they land. Willing to work, and unfortunately at any price. Starving men are not in a position to enforce terms. With them the first consideration is the means of subsistence, and in endeavouring to secure these labour is rendered scarce,

and is insufficiently remunerated. Parishes are taxed wherever they direct their steps, and charitable institutions are burthened with their necessities.

These are, perhaps, the least evils of their presence. Their habits, tastes, and condition, exert a contaminating influence on society. They are objects of deep sympathy, and how mixed and painful are the feelings they suggest; but on these we dare not touch. The truth of many of these remarks is amply corroborated by an appeal to unquestionable facts.

The number of the Irish in this town is estimated at about 3000, including women and children. The proportion of the Irish in the Infirmary is at least one fifth of the patients.* The proportion on the books of the Dispensary, and visited at their homes, is one-eighth of those so attended. These institutions relieve the lame and necessitous poor of all nations, and yet we find that the gathering from all quarters, and especially from a manufacturing community far exceeding 100,000 inhabitants, and a thickly populated country, is only five times greater than that of the Irish.

* At this date, January 8th, there were eighty-five Patients in the house, eighteen of whom were Irish.

This and similar facts are replete with matter worthy of profound reflection.

The indefatigable exertions of the benevolent and enlightened are intended to raise the condition of the masses; but how formidable are the counteracting causes from the constantly increasing introduction of a multitude amongst us destitute of property, intelligence, and refined habits. It may, perhaps, be urged that these will be improved by being brought within the influence of better circumstances. To some extent this is true, but it is also equally unquestionable, that they will exert a deteriorating agency on those immediately around them. Intelligence leaves beneficial traces of its presence; and ignorance, on the other hand, is a curse, the effects of which are widely felt. It is much easier to lower than to elevate the tone of the mind.

Were the Irish too small in number to form a distinct and independent community, their position would be much more favourable for improvement than it is. Even at present they are sufficiently numerous for this purpose, and hence their vices and grovelling habits are liable to be maintained in lively and vigorous activity. As a body they

never exhibit any efforts to raise themselves in society, nor do they show any tendency to copy the thousand little comforts of social and civilized life. Place them in new and comfortable dwellings, and in the midst of respectable operatives, and in a few months symptoms of negligence, filth, and of a disregard of all order and propriety will be painfully evident. We speak from an accurate knowledge of these facts. They are indeed familiar to our daily observation. We do not record them from an unfriendly feeling, or from any wish to render these miserable beings objects of persecution; they ought rather to awaken our sympathy. The allusion is made to them as an evil, an effectual remedy for which does not consist in indiscriminately refusing their claims to charity. They are, however, one of the sources of frequent abuses.

These remarks are more particularly designed to direct attention to this important subject, not in connection alone with charitable institutions. This would present a very inadequate idea of the nature and tendency of the existing and rapidly growing evils. The constitution and wellbeing of society are involved in the inquiry; we speak not from a

heated or lively imagination, but from a knowledge of effects already produced. The causes are known to us, and are estimated according to their results. What these may be, in the future, it is part of our business to lead others to calculate. We set the example, and we trust it will be followed. The subject is as practical as it is extensive in its bearings.

In exposing the abuses practised on Medical Charities, let not our motives be misunderstood: we have expressed our sentiments freely and fearlessly, and, as far as our ability would allow, with perspecuity. The love of truth, the admiration of self-respect and independence, and the wish to promote the progressive improvement of society, have been our only incentives, nor have they allowed the obtrusion of a sense of labour, fatigue, or impatience. The absence of these feelings is some evidence, if not of the sincerity of our motives, at least, of the deep interest we have felt in the prosecution of the investigation.

The foregoing remarks bear principally on the abuses of Medical Charities, they apply, however, forcibly to the evils of charity generally. Were it our business to extend the inquiry to the examination of the latter, the same melancholy facts would

again intrude themselves on our consideration. The evils are not the offspring of one class of institutions, or of a temporary condition of society, caused by depression of trade, or the occasional high-price of food. Many circumstances have contributed to the breaking down of a feeling which, from its spirit of independence, has long been designated English. And paradoxical as the remark may appear, the most powerful has unquestionably been, *an unprecedented degree of prosperity, for an almost uninterrupted series of years.* The mass were intoxicated with this palmy state of things; the necessity for regular or constant labour was no longer felt; the high rate of wages furnished, without much toil, means of subsistence, and for the unbridled indulgence of the passions: hence intemperance, extravagance, and idle and vicious habits. To work, became almost unfashionable, except at the latter end of the week.

We speak from a thorough knowledge of these facts; we were born and educated in the midst of manufactures, and have not been altogether indifferent observers of the causes influencing the condition of society. No ordinary bounds limited the demands of workmen. The rate of wages was constantly vacillating, not from low to high, but from

the latter to a degree still higher, always rising with the request for labour, and at length overstepping it. This exorbitant remuneration was not urged in consequence of the dearness of provisions, but indeed was insisted upon at a time when these were at a ruinous price to the agriculturist. A representation of the injurious effects of such conduct on trade awakened no reflection among the mass. The countermanding of orders, or the inability to execute those on hand, was regarded rather as a triumph than a misfortune.

The frequent repetition of such injudicious proceedings necessarily threw our continental neighbours on their own resources. They found means, talent, and enterprise sufficient to supply many of their own wants, and indeed to compete with us in foreign markets. Commerce and manufactures suffered from these proceedings much more severely than from any restrictive laws. These were neither felt or complained of, until the circumstances already alluded to, in combination with others, either springing out of them, or co-existent and similar in principle, had produced the want of employment.

Then arose the inquiry concerning the cause of the depression. The theorist, in his comprehensive and enlarged views, included in his survey none of

these circumstances which had materially influenced the result. He had not been accustomed to deal in such details; to examine and weigh these fetters the imagination. This requires space for the full display of its powers. To confine it to simple and practical facts is to chain the eagle to the rock.

We must not however dwell on these matters; they are in part foreign to the design of this inquiry, and what is still more objectionable, the views are neither grateful nor orthodox according to prevailing opinions. We must endeavour, at all events, to be the latter. The popular stream requires no straw to be thrown upon its surface to indicate its current, and therefore we will not attempt to stem it. We will look on, and silently make our reflections. It is human nature to trace our misfortunes to others. They never originate in ourselves. Hence the suffering mass are apt to attach importance to causes which have been as little instrumental in the production of the evils complained of as the law of gravitation. Prosperity inflated the industrious classes with unreasonable hopes and expectations; they were thrown into new relations and circumstances, which produced habits and feelings natural only to a tem-

porary state of things, and when this changed all was necessarily in confusion. In returning to a fair and moderate remuneration, they could not at once bring back their habits and feelings. These had lost the little elasticity which they possessed, by having been overstretched. Years will not establish a healthy relation between the two. Prosperity taught what it never ought to teach—a dependence on others. Apprentices or sons were the sources of subsistence and luxury, and charities were heavily taxed to support improvidence.

The indiscriminate distribution of charity is rapidly destroying that high toned feeling of independence, which was once our pride, and its accompanying virtues—industry and sobriety. The benevolent generally are insensible of the evils they create. The miser is often a less injurious member of society. The one does little good, but the other often does positive mischief.

The tendency of the present age is a mania towards the establishment of Charitable Institutions. In runs riot in a wild undefined wish to do good. Such liberality has always been the most marked in the decay of nations. It is one of the unequivocal precursors of that decay, and tends most

powerfully to aggravate the evils which it attempts to correct.

In our subsequent inquiries we shall recur to the discussion of many important subjects, which are here only slightly touched upon. Additional facts will be adduced in support of the leading arguments which have been pursued throughout these pages.

THE END.

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