

# VARIOUS

BLACKWOOD'S  
EDINBURGH MAGAZINE,  
VOLUME 69, NO. 425,  
MARCH, 1851

Various

**Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,  
Volume 69, No. 425, March, 1851**

«Public Domain»

## **Various**

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Volume 69, No. 425, March, 1851 /  
Various — «Public Domain»,

## Содержание

THE DANGERS OF THE COUNTRY	5
MY NOVEL; OR, VARIETIES IN ENGLISH LIFE	28
CHAPTER II	32
CHAPTER III	34
CHAPTER IV	35
CHAPTER V	36
CHAPTER VI	38
CHAPTER VII	40
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	42

# Various Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Volume 69, No. 425, March, 1851

## THE DANGERS OF THE COUNTRY NO. II. – OUR INTERNAL DANGERS

"The apparent contradiction," says the *Edinburgh Review*, "between the vast amount of unrelieved misery in the country, and the vast amount of energetic benevolence now existing in this country, which strikes so many with despair, inspires us, on the contrary, with the most sanguine hopes; because, in that benevolence, we see ample means of remedying nearly all our social evils, – means heretofore impotent solely because misapplied. We agree with the Socialists in holding that the world can never have been intended to be, and will not long remain, what it is. It cannot be that the same intellect which has wrung from nature her most hidden secrets, which has triumphed over the most gigantic material obstructions, which has 'exhausted worlds and then imagined new;' which has discovered and described laws operating in regions of space separate from us by a distance so vast that human imagination cannot figure it and arithmetical language can hardly express it, should not, when fairly applied to social and administrative science, be competent to rectify our errors and to smoothe our path – unless, indeed, society take refuge in the dreary creed, which shall never be ours, that the problem before us is insoluble, and the wretchedness around us inherent and incurable."<sup>1</sup>

We entirely concur in these eloquent and just observations, though the honest and candid admissions they contain sound rather strange when coming from a journal which has, for nearly half-a-century, been the most strenuous, and not the least able, supporter of the system which has terminated in these woful results. We concur with this author in thinking, that it never was intended by Providence that things in this country should be as they now are; and that it is impossible they can long continue so. Sooner or later, if the premonitory symptoms of our diseased state continue to be disregarded by our rulers, and the influential part of the nation who now determine our policy, as they have been for a great number of years back, some terrible catastrophe will arise, like that in Ireland by the failure of the potato crop in 1846, which, amidst an appalling and perhaps unprecedented amount of human suffering, is in course of rectifying many of the social evils under which that ill-starred country has so long laboured. We narrowly escaped such a catastrophe on occasion of the great monetary crisis of October 1847, by far the most serious and widespread which Great Britain has ever known; and so much was the nation in its vital resources weakened by that calamity, and so wearing-out and grievous are the causes of evil still operating amongst us, that it is much to be feared that the catastrophe we anticipate will not be deferred beyond the next of the periodical monetary crises with which the country is now so regularly afflicted.

What renders our present social condition so alarming and depressing to the contemplative mind is, that the evils which are so widespread through society have only increased with the advance of the nation in general industry, accumulated capital, and mechanical power; and at a time when universal and unprecedented exertions have been made both for the religious and moral education of the working-classes, the improvement of their habits, and the extension of their information. The most superficial observer must be aware what astonishing progress we have made since 1815. Our exports and imports have tripled – our shipping doubled<sup>2</sup> – our population advanced fully 50

---

<sup>1</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, January 1851, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> – *Parliamentary Tables*.

per cent. Our agriculture has kept pace with this astonishing increase, insomuch that, down to the commencement of five bad years in succession, in 1836, followed by Free Trade in 1842 and 1846, our imports of wheat and flour had sunk to a *hundredth-part* of the food of our people. At no former period, in England's or the world's history, were such efforts made by energetic and philanthropic individuals to stem the progress of public and private disaster, or such noble and even heroic sacrifices made by the State to assuage, where it was most aggravated, the intensity of private suffering. At one period Government gave £20,000,000 to compensate the planters in the West Indies for Negro Emancipation; at another £10,000,000, to relieve the effects of famine and Irish improvidence. The efforts made in the cause of education, religious instruction, church accommodation, the relief of pauperism, the elevation of the standard of comfort, and the improvement of the habits of the poor, have been innumerable, systematic, and unwearied.

In Scotland, a new great sect of Presbyterians has grown up more suited than the Establishment to the inclinations of a large part of the people, and they have, in three years, built and provided for *eight hundred* new places of worship, at a cost of above £1,500,000. In Glasgow alone, *thirty-two* have been erected, at a cost of £107,000! besides *fifteen*, erected a few years before, by subscription of persons connected with the Establishment. The prodigious efforts made by the dignitaries and pastors of the Church of England, to extend the sphere and increase the utility of their Establishment, are known to all the world, and have extorted the reluctant applause even of the most inveterate of their opponents. All other religious persuasions have done the same: Roman Catholics, Methodists, Wesleyans, Dissenters of all sorts, have vied with each other in zeal and efforts to extend their respective adherents, and augment the number and respectability of their places of worship. Education has shared in the general movement; and although Government has yet done little, the number of voluntary schools established in most parts of the country almost exceeds belief. At the same time, the average poor-rates of England have for the last ten years been about £6,000,000. Scotland has got a more efficient one than the cautious administration of the old law had permitted, which already expends about £500,000 yearly on the relief of indigence: and Ireland has got a new one, which at its greatest distress expended above £2,000,000 in a year, and still dispenses upwards of £1,500,000 annually. Yet, in the midst of all this prodigious increase of national industry, religious zeal, and philanthropic activity, the condition of the greater part of our working classes has been daily getting worse, and was never perhaps, as a whole, so bad as in this year, when, in consequence of Continental pacification, Bank discounts at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, and a great influx of Californian gold, prices of manufactured articles have risen 20 per cent, and the great manufacturing towns are in a state of general prosperity. Ample evidence of all this will be brought forward in the sequel of this essay.

Notwithstanding all this, we do not despair either of the human race or of the fortunes and social condition of this country. We are firm believers in the doctrine, derived equally from natural and revealed religion, that the greater part of the evils, individual and social, of this life are derived from the effects of human selfishness, folly, or wickedness, and that it is sin which has brought death to nations not less than individuals. Barring some calamities which are obviously beyond the reach of human remedy – such as sickness, the death of relations or friends, and external disasters, as famine or pestilence – there is scarcely an ill which now afflicts mankind which may not be distinctly traced to human selfishness or folly in the present or some preceding generation. That God will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children is indeed as loudly proclaimed in the history of man as ever it was among the thunders of Mount Sinai. But, assuming this to be the principle of the Divine government of mankind, we are confident we are within bounds when we say that four-fifths, perhaps nine-tenths, of the social and private evils which now afflict humanity, are the direct consequences of selfishness or folly in this or some recently preceding generation. Every attentive observer of the fate of individuals or families around him must see that this is the case in private life; and a very little attention alone is required to convince one that to the same cause is to be ascribed four-fifths of the social evils, great as they are, which all feel to be now so overwhelming.

We propose, first, to establish the fact that, amidst all the boasted and really astonishing increase of our national industry, the suffering and misery of the working-classes has constantly, on an average of years, gone on increasing; and then to consider to what causes this most alarming and disheartening state of things is to be ascribed. To prove the first, it is sufficient to refer to three authentic sources of information – the records of emigration, of crime, and of pauperism, for the last twenty-eight years.

From the table given below, it appears that while, in the year 1826, immediately following the dreadful monetary crisis of December 1825, – by far the severest which had *then* been felt – the total emigration from the British Islands was under twenty-one thousand; in the year 1849, being the fourth year of Free Trade, and in its last six months one of great commercial activity, it had reached *the enormous and unprecedented amount of THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND!* In twenty-five years of almost ceaseless Liberal government, and carrying out the principles, social and political, of the Political Economists, the number of persons driven into exile had increased *fifteen-fold*. So extraordinary and decisive a proof of the progressive increase of suffering in a people is perhaps not to be found in the whole annals of mankind. The emigration-returns for 1850 have not yet been made up, but that they will exhibit a result not less striking and woful than the preceding years may be judged of by the facts, that the emigration from Liverpool, which in 1849 was 154,400, had risen in 1850 to 174,260; and that the emigrants who landed at New York alone, in 1850, were 212,796 – of whom 116,552 were Irish, and 28,125 English subjects, the remainder being chiefly Scotch and Germans.<sup>3</sup>

We say, and say advisedly, that this prodigious flood of emigrants were, for the most part, *driven into exile* by suffering, not tempted into it by hope, and that its progressive increase is the most decisive proof of the enhanced misery and suffering of the working classes. The slightest consideration of the last column of the table below<sup>4</sup> must demonstrate this. Every known and deplored year of suffering has been immediately followed by a great increase in the number of emigrants in the next, or some subsequent years. Thus, in the year 1825, the total emigration was only 14,891; but the monetary crisis of December in that year raised it to 20,900 in the next year. In the year 1830, the last of the Duke of Wellington's administration, the emigration was 56,907; but in the two next years, being those of Reform agitation and consequent penury, these numbers were almost doubled: they rose to 83,160 in 1831, and to 103,140 in 1832. With the fine harvests and consequent prosperity of 1833 and 1834, they sank to 44,478; but the bad seasons of 1838, 1839, and 1840 made them rapidly rise again, until they became,

1840,	90,743
1841,	118,592
1842,	128,342

The Railway Mania and artificial excitement of 1843 and 1844 brought down these numbers to *one half*– they were 57,212 and 70,686 in these two years successively. But the Currency Laws of 1844 and 1845, and Free Trade of 1846, soon more than *quadrupled* these numbers; and they have *never since receded*, but, on the contrary, rapidly increased ever since. The numbers were: —

Currency Acts, 1845,	93,501
Free Trade, 1846,	129,851
Irish Famine, 1847,	258,270
Free Trade, 1848,	248,089
Free Trade, 1849,	299,4982

---

<sup>3</sup> *Times*, Jan. 21, 1851.

<sup>4</sup> Average annual emigration from the United Kingdom for the last twenty-five years, 91,407.

More convincing proof that emigration is, for the most part, the result of general distress, and that the intensity and wide spread of that distress is to be measured by its increase, cannot possibly be imagined.

In the next place, the criminal records for the same period, since 1822, demonstrate, in a manner equally decisive, that amidst all our advances in civilisation, wealth, and productive industry, the causes producing an increase of crime have been equally active; and that, abreast of the distress which drove such prodigious and increasing multitudes into exile, have advanced the social evils which have, in an equal ratio, multiplied the criminals among those who remain at home.

From the table quoted below, it appears that, since the year 1822, serious crime, over the whole empire, has advanced fully 300 per cent; while the numbers of the people, during the same period, have not increased more than 30 per cent, which of itself is a very great and most surprising increase for an old state. It has advanced from 27,000 to 75,000. In other words, serious crime, during the last twenty-five years, has advanced TEN TIMES as fast as the numbers of the people.<sup>5</sup>

The same table is equally valuable in another point of view, as demonstrating, that it is to a general and progressive increase of *distress* that this deplorable result is to be ascribed. Every year of great and general suffering has been immediately followed in the next and the succeeding ones by a sudden start in crime, which has again as regularly receded, when a returning gleam of prosperity has for a time illuminated the prospects of the working-classes in the community. Thus, the dreadful monetary crisis of December 1825 was followed next year by a considerable increase of commitments: they rose from 31,828 to 38,071. The numbers again fell to 33,273 and 36,009 in 1829 and 1830, which were years of comparative comfort. The Reform agitation, and consequent distress of 1831 and 1832, raised them again to 49,523 in 1834; while the Joint-stock mania and fine harvests of 1835 lowered it to 44,803. The bad harvests, great importation, and consequent monetary crisis of 1839 and 1840 raised them most materially; they amounted to 54,244 and 54,892 in those years respectively. The fine harvests and Railway mania of 1844 and 1845 lowered them to 49,565 and 44,536; but the Irish famine and Free-trade measures of 1846, followed, as they necessarily were, by the dreadful monetary crisis of October 1847, raised them again to an unprecedented amount, from which they have never since receded. In 1848, they were 73,780; in 1849, 74,162; of which, last year, no less than 41,980 were in Ireland, being nearly 4000 more than 1848 – albeit the harvest of 1849 was very fine, and the preceding year had been the year of the Irish rebellion, and when that country might be presumed to be still labouring under the effects of the famine of autumn 1846.

The poor's rate from 1822 to 1849<sup>6</sup> affords an equally conclusive proof of the steady increase of pauperism – varying, of course, like the crime and emigration, with the prosperity and suffering of particular years, but exhibiting on the whole a great and most portentous increase. This appears even when it is measured in money; but still more strikingly and convincingly when measured in grain – the true test both of its amount and its weight, as by far the greatest part of it is laid out in the purchase of food for the paupers, and the price of that food is an index to the ability of the land to bear it. It is to be recollected that the new Poor Law, which was introduced to check the rapid and alarming increase in the poor's rates of England and Wales, was passed in 1834, and came into full operation in 1835, and has since continued unaltered. It certainly effected a great reduction at first; but that it was not lasting, and was speedily altered by the Free-Trade measures, is decisively proved by the following table, furnished by Mr Porter. The in-door and out-door paupers of England since 1840 have stood thus to 1848: —

---

<sup>5</sup> Table showing the commitments for Serious Crime in England, Scotland, and Ireland, from 1822 to 1849, both inclusive: —

<sup>6</sup> Table showing the Poor's Rates of England and Wales, with their Population, and the amount in Quarters of Grain in every year, from 1822 to 1849, both inclusive: — 26 New Poor-Law came into operation. *Poor's-Rate Report*, 1849; and Porter, 90, 3d ed. — The five last years' prices are not from Mr Porter's work, where they are obviously wrong, but from *Parl. Pap.* 1850, No. 460.



1840,	1,199,529
1841,	1,299,048
1842,	1,427,187
1843,,	1,539,490
1844,	1,477,561
1845,	1,470,970
1846,	1,332,089
1847,	1,720,350
1848,	1,626,201

– *Progress of the Nation*, 3d Ed. p. 94.

These are the results exhibited in England and Wales. The poor's rates since 1837 have doubled in real weight, and we need not say that they are calculated to awaken the most alarming reflections; the more especially when it is recollected that the year 1849 was one of reviving, and, during its last six months, of boasted commercial prosperity. But the matter becomes much more serious, and the picture of the social condition of the island much more correct and striking, when the simultaneous measures, adopted during the last five years in Scotland and Ireland, are taken into consideration.

We need not tell our readers that, prior to 1844, Ireland had no poor law at all; and that although Scotland had a most humane and admirable poor law on its statute-book, yet its operation had been so much frittered away and nullified, by the unhappy decision of the Court of Session, which gave no control to the *local* courts over the decisions of the heritors and kirk-sessions (church-wardens of parishes), thereby in effect rendering them judges without control in their own cause, that it, practically speaking, amounted to almost nothing. But as the evils of that state of things had become apparent, and had been demonstrated *luce meridianâ clarius*, by Dr Alison and other distinguished philanthropists, an efficient statute was passed in 1845, which corrected this evil, and has since produced the following results, which may well attract the notice of the most inconsiderate, from the rapid increase which pauperism exhibits, and the extraordinary magnitude it has already attained in Scotland —

Years	Sums raised	Number of Poor, fixed and casual			Registered Paupers		
1840	£202,812						
1841	218,481						
1844	258,814						
1845	306,044	63,070	or 1 in	42	62,070	or 1 in	42
1846	435,367	69,432	— 1 —	38	69,432	— 1 —	38
1847	533,073	146,370	— 1 —	17.8	74,161	— 1 —	35.3
1848	583,613	227,647	— 1 —	11.5	77,732	— 1 —	33.7
1849		202,120	— 1 —	12.96	82,357	— 1 —	31.8

– *Poor-Law Report, Scotland*, Aug. 1849.

In the year 1850, a year of unusual commercial prosperity, the sums assessed for the relief of the poor in Glasgow alone, irrespective of buildings and other expenses connected with them, was £87,637, and with these expenses £121,000.<sup>7</sup>

In Ireland, the growth of the Poor Law, from its first introduction, has been still more rapid and alarming, as might have been anticipated from the greater mass of indigence and destitution with which it there had to contend. The sums raised for relief of the poor in that country, the *nominal* rental of which is £13,000,000, has stood thus for the last three years —

<sup>7</sup> Dr Young's *Report*, Jan. 1851

Year ending Sept. 29	Collected	Expended	Indoor Paupers, August	Outdoor Paupers
1846	£359,870	£350,667		
1847	585,507	717,713	75,376	
1848	1,559,248	1,732,597	150,000	833,889
1849	1,648,337	2,177,651	203,199	666,224
1850	1,561,846	1,274,125	264,048 <sup>9</sup>	141,077

– *Third Annual Report, Ireland*, p. 7.

8 On 22d June, 1850.

On 3d July 1847, no less than 3,020,712 *persons were fed by the public in Ireland*, being about 40 per cent on the whole population – certainly, at that date, under 8,000,000. Well may the *Edinburgh Review* say, in reference to this astonishing subject —

"The collection in the year 1847-8 is remarkable: three times the amount of the collections of 1846-7, five times the amount of the collections of 1845-6. A tax unknown in Ireland ten years before was levied in the Year 1848 to the extent of *one-ninth* of the rateable property of the country, and that in a period of unprecedented depression and embarrassment. In the same year the expenditure had risen *150 per cent* above that of 1847, and *500 per cent* above the expenditure of 1846. The expenditure in 1848-9 exceeds that of 1847 by the large sum of £445,054."<sup>9</sup>

The diminished expenditure of 1850 is mainly owing to the reduction in the price of provisions in that year, which has caused the cost of an in-door pauper to decline from 2s. 2d., which it was in April 1847, to 1s. 2d., *or nearly a half*, to which it fell in autumn 1849, which it has never since exceeded. Measured by quarters of grain, the poor's-rate of Ireland, in 1850, was fully twice as heavy as it was in 1848, when the effects of the disastrous famine of 1846 were still felt.

After these broad and decisive facts, drawn from so many official sources, and all conspiring to one result, it may seem unnecessary to go further, or load these pages, for which matter abundant to overflowing still remains, with any farther proof or illustration of a thing unhappily too apparent. But as our present system is mainly calculated for the interests of our great manufacturing cities, and, at all events, has been brought about by their influence, and is strictly in conformity with their demands, we cannot resist the insertion of an extract from an eloquent speech of a most able, humane, and zealous minister of the Free Church in Glasgow on the moral and religious state of the working-classes in that vast and rapidly-increasing city, which now has little short of 400,000 inhabitants within its bounds.

"I know," said Dr Paterson, "that many congregations, not of the Free Church, both feel and manifest an anxious and enlightened concern in this cause. I do not attempt to describe their efforts, simply because I am not in a position to do them justice. I hail them, however, as fellow-labourers. I rejoice to know that they are in the field to some extent already, and I shall rejoice still more to see their exertions multiplying side by side with our own. Certain I am that nothing short of *a levy en masse of whatever there is of living Christianity in the city*, in all the branches of the Church of Christ which it contains, will suffice to make head against the *augmenting ignorance and ungodliness, and Popery and infidelity, with which we have to deal*. My other observation is for the members of our own church. Some of them will, perhaps, be startled by this movement, simply because it is adding another to our already numerous schemes – and because it may aggravate the difficulty we already feel of carrying them on. Here, they may say, is the beginning of new demands upon both our money and our time. To such a complaint I have no other answer to

---

<sup>9</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, Jan. 1851.

make but one – but it is one that seems to me to be decisive. My answer is, that this movement, whatever it may cost, is a matter of life and death. If we *do not destroy this evil, it will destroy us.*"

These are certainly strong expressions, but they come from one well acquainted, from personal visitation in his parish, which is one of the most densely peopled in Glasgow, and second to none in zeal and ability to combat the enormous mass of destitution, crime, sensuality, and civilised heathenism with which he has to deal. And that he does not exaggerate the evil, and speaks from accurate information, not vague imagination, is evident from the details which he gives.

"I begin with the Old Wynd, which is the western boundary of the parish, and of which only the one side, therefore, is in the Tron parish. That one side contains 102 families and 504 individuals. Among that population there are possessed in all only 11 church sittings, or little more than 2 to the 100. Of the 102 families, only 14 profess to be in the habit of going to any place of worship. In the New Wynd, there are 350 families and 1976 individuals, possessing in all 66 church sittings, or little more than 3 to the 100. Of the 350 families, only 67 profess to be in the habit of attending any place of worship. Lastly, the Back Wynd contains 137 families and 752 individuals, who possess in all only 6 church sittings, or less than 1 to the 100! Of these 137 families, only 13 profess to attend any place of worship. Here, then, in these three Wynds, constituting but a section of the parish, we have a population of 3232 individuals, with only 83 church sittings, or little more than an average of 2½ to the 100. Of the 589 families of which that population consists, the enormous number of *495 families, by their own confession, are living in habitual and total estrangement from the house of God.* In these appalling circumstances, it will not surprise the presbytery to learn, that in the whole of the three Wynds there were found no more than 117 Bibles – in other words, that scarcely *one* family in *five* were possessed of a copy of the Word of God."

Again he says —

"During the first ten of the last thirty years – that is, from 1821 to 1831 – the population increased at the rate of about 5000 a-year. During the second ten of these years – that is, from 1831 to 1841 – it increased at the rate of 8000 a-year. During the third ten of these years – that is, from 1841 to 1851 – it is believed, on good grounds, that the increase will average 12,000 a-year. Let any man consider these facts, and then, if he has courage to look forward at all, let him try *to picture to himself the state of Glasgow when another thirty years shall have run their course.* If the same ratio of increase holds on – and I know of no good reason for doubting that it will – we shall have in thirty years a population nearly equal in numbers to that of Paris; and most assuredly, if the Christian churches do not speedily arouse themselves, it will be by that time like Paris in more respects than one. We may have the numbers of the French capital, but we shall have *their infidelity, their Popery, their licentiousness, and their lawlessness too.* If our efforts did not keep pace with a population growing at the rate of 5000 a-year, how are such efforts to do alongside of a population growing at the rate of from 12,000 to 15,000 a-year? If in the race of the last thirty years we fell at least twenty years behind, how tremendously and how ruinously shall we be distanced in the next thirty years to come! 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses! And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan!'"

We select this as a picture of our great manufacturing towns, in which the greatest and most unbounded prosperity, so far as mere production goes, has prevailed, generally speaking, for the last thirty years; in which the custom-house duties have increased, since 1812, from £3000 a-year to £660,000, and the river dues from £4500 to £66,000 in the same period; but in which the sums expended in poor-rates and pauper burials were, in round numbers, —

	Poor Rates.	Pauper Burials.
1848	£180,000	4042
1849	132,000	3577
1850	120,000 <sup>10</sup>	2381

10 Including buildings £87,000; for poor alone.

Indicating the deplorable destitution of multitudes in the midst of this growing wealth and unparalleled increase of manufacturing and commercial greatness. In the last year, out of 10,461 burials, no less than 2381, or nearly *a fourth*, were at the public expense.<sup>11</sup>

Of the wretched condition of a large class of the operatives of Glasgow – that employed in making clothes for the rest of the community – the following striking account has been given in a recent interesting publication on the "Sweating System," by a merchant tailor of the city: —

"The *out-door* or sweating system, by which the great proportion of their work is produced, has had a fearful debasing effect on journeymen tailors. Work is given out to a person denominated a "middle-man." He alone comes into contact with the employer. He employs others to work under him, in his own house. The workmen have no respect for him, as they have for an ordinary employer; nor has he the slightest influence over them, in enforcing proper conduct or prudent habits. On the contrary, his influence tends only to their hurt. *He engages them to work at the lowest possible prices*— making all the profit he can out of them. He ordinarily sets them down to work in a small, dirty room, in some unhealthy part of the city. They are allowed to work at irregular hours. Sunday, in innumerable instances brings no rest to the tailor under the sweating system; he must serve his slave-driver on that day too, even if he should go idle on the other days of the week. *No use of churches or ministers to him; his calling is to produce so-called cheap clothes for the million*— Sunday or Monday being alike necessary for such a laudable pursuit, though his soul should perish. Small matter that: only let *the cheap system flourish, and thereby increase the riches of the people*, and then full compensation has been made, though moral degradation, loss of all self-respect, and tattered rags, be the lot of the unhappy victim, sunk by it to the lowest possible degree."<sup>12</sup>

Such is the effect of the cheapening and competition system, in one of our greatest manufacturing towns, in a year of great and unusual commercial prosperity. That the condition of the vast multitude engaged in the making of clothes in the metropolis is not better, may be judged of by the fact that there are in London 20,000 journeymen tailors, of whom 14,000 can barely earn a miserable subsistence by working fourteen hours a-day, Sunday included; and that Mr Sidney Herbert himself, a great Free-Trader, has been lately endeavouring to get subscriptions for the needlewomen of London, on the statement that there are there 33,000 females of that class, who only earn on an average 4½. a day, by working fourteen hours. And the writer of this Essay has ascertained, by going over the returns of the census of 1841 for Glasgow, (Occupations of the People,) that there were in

---

<sup>11</sup> Dr Strang's Report, 1851.

<sup>12</sup> *Modern System of Low-priced Goods*, p. 2, 3.

Glasgow in that year above 50,000 women engaged in factories or needle-work, and whose average earnings certainly do not, even in this year of boasted commercial prosperity, exceed 7s. or 8s. a week. *Their number is now, beyond all question, above 60,000*, and their wages not higher. Such is the cheapening and competition system in the greatest marts of manufacturing industry, and in a year when provisions were cheap, exports great, and the system devised for its special encouragement in full and unrestrained activity.

Facts of this kind give too much reason to believe that the picture drawn in a late work of romance, but evidently taken by a well-informed observer in London, is too well founded in fact: —

"Every working tailor must come to this at last, on the present system; and we are lucky in having been spared so long. You all know where this will end – in the same misery as 15,000 out of 20,000 of our class are enduring now. We shall become the slaves, often the bodily prisoners, of Jews, middle-men, and sweaters, who draw their livelihood out of our starvation. We shall have to fare as the rest have – ever decreasing prices of labour, ever increasing profits, made out of that labour by the contractors who will employ us – arbitrary fines, inflicted at the caprice of hirelings – the competition of women, and children, and starving Irish – our hours of work will increase one-third, our actual pay decrease to less than one-half. And in all this we shall have no hope, no chance of improvement in wages, but even more penury, slavery, misery, as we are pressed on by those who are sucked by fifties – almost by hundreds – yearly out of the honourable trade in which we were brought up, into the infernal system of contract work, which is devouring our trade, and many others, body and soul. Our wives will be forced to sit up night and day to help us – our children must labour from the cradle, without chance of going to school, hardly of breathing the fresh air of heaven – our boys, as they grow up, must turn beggars or paupers – our daughters, as thousands do, must eke out their miserable earnings by prostitution. And after all, a whole family will not gain what one of us had been doing, as yet, single-handed. You know there will be no hope for us. There is no use appealing to Government or Parliament."<sup>13</sup>

We shall only add to these copious extracts and documents one illustrative of the state to which the West Highlands of Scotland have been brought by Free Trade in black cattle and barilla, the staple of their industry: —

Price of the Estate, £163,779.

Years.	Receipts.			Expenditure on Estate.		
1847	£4,1347	07	07	£7,3057	07	0
1848	1,781	0	0	4,253	0	0
1849	1,109	0	0	1,294	0	0
1850	1,345	0	0	1,126	0	0

– Inverness Courier.

Couple this with the facts that, in 1850, in the face of average prices of wheat at about 40s. a quarter, the importation of all sorts of grain into Great Britain and Ireland was about 9,500,000 quarters – of course displacing domestic industry employed previous to 1846 in this production; so that the acres under wheat cultivation in Ireland have sunk from 1,048,000 in 1847, to 664,000 in 1849; and there will be no difficulty in explaining the immense influx of the destitute from the

---

<sup>13</sup> *Alton Locke*, vol. i. p. 149-50.

country into the great towns – augmenting thus the enormous mass of destitution, pauperism, and wretchedness, with which they are already overwhelmed.

Such is a picture, however brief and imperfect, of the social condition of our population, after twenty years of Liberal government, self-direction, and increasing popularisation, enhanced, during the last five years, by the blessings of Free Trade and a restricted and fluctuating currency. The question remains the most momentous on which public attention can now be engaged. Is this state of things *unavoidable*, or are there any means by which, under Providence, it may be removed or alleviated? Part of it is unavoidable, and by no human wisdom could be averted. But by far the greater part is directly owing to the selfish and shortsighted legislation of man, and might at once be removed by a wise, just, and equal system of government.

There is an unavoidable tendency, in all old and wealthy states, for riches to concentrate in the highest ranks, and numbers to become excessive in the lowest. This arises from the different set of principles which, at the opposite ends of the chain of society, regulate human conduct in the direction of life. Prudence, and the desire of elevation, are predominant at the one extremity; recklessness, and the thirst for gratification, at the other. Life is spent in the one in striving to gain, and endeavouring to rise; in the other, in seeking indulgence, and struggling with its consequences. Marriage is contracted in the former, generally speaking, from prudential or ambitious motives; in the latter, from the influence of passion, or the necessity of a home. In the former, fortune marries fortune, or rank is allied to rank; in the latter, poverty is linked to poverty, and destitution engenders destitution. These opposite set of principles come, in the progress of time, to exercise a great and decisive influence on the comparative numbers and circumstances of the affluent and the destitute classes. The former can rarely, if ever, maintain their own numbers; the latter are constantly increasing in numbers, with scarcely any other limit on their multiplication but the experienced impossibility of rearing a family. Fortunes run into fortunes by intermarriage, the effects of continued saving, and the dying out of the direct line of descendants among the rich. Poverty is allied to poverty by the recklessness invariably produced by destitution among the poor. Hence the rich, in an old and wealthy community, have a tendency to get richer, and the poor poorer; and the increase of wealth only increases this tendency, and renders it more decided with every addition made to the national fortunes. This tendency is altogether irrespective of primogeniture, entails, or any other device to retain property in a particular class of society. It exists as strongly in the mercantile class, whose fortunes are for the most part equally divided, as in the landed, where the estate descends in general to the eldest son; and was as conspicuous in former days in Imperial Rome, when primogeniture was unknown, and is now complained of as as great a grievance in Republican France, where the portions of children are fixed by law, as it is in Great Britain, where the feudal institutions still prevail among those connected with real estates.

In the next place, this tendency in old and opulent communities has been much enhanced, in the case of Great Britain, by the extraordinary combination of circumstances – some natural, some political – which have, in a very great degree, augmented its manufacturing and commercial industry. It would appear to be a general law of nature, in the application of which the progress of society makes no or very little change – that machinery and the division of labour can add scarcely anything to the powers of human industry in the cultivation of the soil – but that they can work prodigies in the manufactories or trades which minister to human luxury or enjoyment. The proof of this is decisive. England, grey in years, and overloaded with debt, can undersell the inhabitants of Hindostan in cotton manufactures, formed in Manchester out of cotton grown on the banks of the Ganges or the Mississippi; but she is undersold in grain, and to a ruinous extent, by the Polish or American cultivators, with grain raised on the banks of the Vistula or the Ohio. It is the steam-engine and the division of labour which have worked this prodigy. They enable a girl or a child, with the aid of machinery, to do the work of a hundred men. They substitute the inanimate spindle for human hands. But there is no steam-engine in agriculture. The spade and the hoe are its spindles, and they

must be worked by human hands. Garden cultivation, exclusively done by man, is the perfection of husbandry. By a lasting law of nature, the first and best employment of man is reserved, and for ever reserved, for the human race. Thus it could not be avoided that in Great Britain, so advantageously situated for foreign commerce, possessing the elements of great naval strength in its forests, and the materials in the bowels of the earth from which manufacturing greatness was to arise, should come, in process of time, to find its manufacturing bear an extraordinary and scarce paralleled proportion to its agricultural population.

Consequent on this was another circumstance, scarcely less important in its effects than the former, which materially enhanced the tendency to excess of numbers in the manufacturing portions of the community. This was the encouragement given to the employment of *women and children in preference to men* in most manufacturing establishments – partly from the greater cheapness of their labour, partly from their being better adapted than the latter for many of the operations connected with machines, and partly from their being more manageable, and less addicted to strikes and other violent insurrections, for the purpose of forcing up wages. Great is the effect of this tendency, which daily becomes more marked as prices decline, competition increases, and political associations among workmen become more frequent and formidable by the general popularising of institutions. The steam-engine thus is generally found to be the sole moving power in factories; spindles and spinning-jennies the hands by which their work is performed; women and children the attendants on their labour. There is no doubt that this precocious forcing of youth, and general employment of young women in factories, is often a great resource to families in indigent circumstances, and enables the children and young women of the poor to bring in, early in life, as much as enables their parents, without privation, often to live in idleness. But what effect *must* it have upon the principle of population, and the vital point for the welfare of the working-classes – the proportion between the demand for and the supply of labour? When young children of either sex are sure, in ordinary circumstances, of finding employment in factories, what an extraordinary impulse is given to population around them, under circumstances when the lasting demand for labour in society cannot find them employment! The boys and girls find employment in the factories for six or eight years; so far all is well: but what comes of these boys and girls when they become men and women, fathers and mothers of children, legitimate and illegitimate, and their place in the factories is filled by a new race of infants and girls, destined in a few years more to be supplanted, in their turn, by a similar inroad of juvenile and precocious labour? It is evident that this is an important and alarming feature in manufacturing communities; and, where they have existed long, and are widely extended, it has a tendency to induce, after a time, an alarming disproportion between the demand for, and the supply of *full-grown labour* over the entire community. And to this we are in a great degree to ascribe the singular fact, so well and painfully known to all persons practically acquainted with such localities, that while manufacturing towns are the places where the greatest market exists for juvenile or infant labour – to obtain which the poor flock from all quarters with ceaseless alacrity – they are at the same time the places where destitution in general prevails to the greatest and most distressing extent, and it is most difficult for full-grown men and women to obtain permanent situations or wages, on which they can maintain themselves in comfort. Their only resource, often, is to trust, in their turn, to the employment of their children for the wages necessary to support the family. Juvenile labour becomes profitable – a family is not felt as a burden, but rather as an advantage *at first*; and a forced and unnatural impulse is given to population by the very circumstances, in the community, which are abridging the means of desirable subsistence to the persons brought into existence.

Lastly the close proximity of Ireland, and the improvident habits and rapid increase of its inhabitants, has for above half a century had a most important effect in augmenting, in a degree altogether disproportioned to the extension in the demand for labour, the numbers of the working classes in the community in Great Britain. Without stopping to inquire into the causes of the calamity, it may be sufficient to refer to the fact, unhappily too well and generally known to require any

illustration, that the numbers of labourers of the very humblest class in Ireland has been long excessive; and that any accidental failure in the usual means of subsistence never fails to impel multitudes in quest of work or charity, upon the more industrious and consequently opulent realm of Britain. Great as has been the emigration, varying from 200,000 to 250,000 a-year from Ireland, during the last two years to Transatlantic regions, it has certainly been equalled, if not exceeded, by the simultaneous influx of Irish hordes into the western provinces of Britain. It is well known<sup>14</sup> that, during the whole of 1848, the inundation into Glasgow was at the rate of above 1000 a-week on an average; and into Liverpool generally above double the number. The census now in course of preparation will furnish many most valuable returns on this subject, and prove to what extent English has suffered by the competition of Irish labour. In the mean time, it seems sufficient to refer to this well-known social evil, as one of the causes which has powerfully contributed to increase the competition among the working-classes, and enhance the disproportion between the demand for, and the supply of, labour, which with few and brief exceptions has been felt as so distressing in Great Britain for the last thirty years.

Powerful as these causes of evil undoubtedly were, they were not beyond the reach of remedy by human means – nay, circumstances simultaneously existed which, if duly taken advantage of, might have converted them into a source of blessings. They had enormously augmented the powers of productive industry in the British Empire; and in the wealth, dominion, and influence thereby acquired, the means had been opened up of giving full employment to the multitudes displaced by its boundless machinery and extended manufacturing skill. Great Britain and Ireland enjoyed one immense advantage – their territory was not merely capable of yielding food for the whole present inhabitants, numerous and rapidly increasing as they were, but for double or triple the number. The proof of this is decisive. Although the two islands had added above a half to their numbers between 1790 and 1835, the importation of foreign grain had been continually diminishing; and in the five years ending with 1835, they had come to be on an average only 398,000 quarters of grain and flour in a year – being not *a hundredth* part of the whole subsistence of the people. Further, agriculture in Great Britain, from the great attention paid to it, and the extended capital and skill employed in its prosecution, had come to be more and more worked by manual labour, and was rapidly approaching – at least, in the richer districts of the country —*the horticultural system*, in which at once the greatest produce is obtained from the soil, and the greatest amount of human labour is employed in its cultivation; and in which the greatest manufacturing states of former days, Florence and Flanders, had, on the decay of their manufacturing industry, found a never-failing resource for a denser population than now exists in Great Britain.

But, more than all, England possessed, in her immense and rapidly-increasing colonies in every quarter of the globe, at once an inexhaustible vent and place of deposit for its surplus home population, the safest and most rapidly-increasing market for its manufacturing industry, and the most certain means, in the keeping up the communication between the different parts of so vast a dominion, of maintaining and extending its maritime superiority. This was a resource unknown to any former state, and apparently reserved for the Anglo-Saxon race, whom such mighty destinies awaited in the progress of mankind. The forests of Canada, the steppes of Australia, the hills of New Zealand, the savannahs of the Cape, seemed spread out by nature to receive the numerous and sturdy children of the Anglo-Saxon race, whom the natural progress of opulence, the division of labour, the extension of machinery, and the substitution of female and juvenile for male labour, were depriving of employment in their native seats. In the colonies, manual labour was as much in demand as it was redundant in the parent state. No machinery or manufactures existed there to displace the arm of the labourer's industry; the felling of the forest, the draining of the morass, the cultivation of the wild, chained the

---

<sup>14</sup> It was ascertained, from an accurate return obtained by the Magistrates of Glasgow, that the number of persons who arrived at that city by the Clyde, or the Ayrshire railway, in four months preceding 10th April 1848, was 42,860.



great majority of the human race to agricultural employments, for generations and centuries to come. Even the redundant number and rapid increase of the Celtic population in Ireland could not keep pace with the demand for agricultural labour in our Transatlantic dominions. The undue preponderance of the female sex, felt as so great and consuming an evil in all old and wealthy cities, might be rendered the greatest possible blessing to the infant colonies, in which the greatest social evil always experienced is the excessive numbers of the male sex. All that was required was the removal of them from the overburdened heart to the famishing extremities of the empire; and this, while it relieved the labour, promised to afford ample employment to the national navy. The magnitude of this traffic may be judged of by the fact that the 212,000 emigrants who arrived at New York in the year 1850 were brought in 2000 vessels. At the same time the rapid growth of the colonies, under such a system, would have furnished a steady market for the most extensive manufacturing industry at home, and that in a class of men descended from ourselves, imbued with our habits, actuated by feeling our wants, and chained by circumstances, for centuries to come, to the exclusive consumption of our manufactures. What the magnitude of this market might have been may be judged of by the fact that, in the year 1850, Australia and New Zealand, with a population which had not yet reached 250,000 souls, took off in the year 1850 £2,080,364 of our manufactures, being at the rate of £8 a-head; while Russia, with a population of 66,000,000, only took off £1,572,593 worth, being not 6d. a-head.<sup>15</sup>

The social evils which at first sight appear so alarming, therefore, in consequence of the extension of our manufacturing population, and the vast increase of our wealth, were in reality not only easily susceptible of remedy, but they might, by a wise and paternal policy, alive equally to the interests *represented and unrepresented* of all parts of the empire, have been converted into so many sources of increasing prosperity and durable social happiness. All that was required was to adopt a policy conducive alike to the interests of *all* parts of our varied dominions, but giving no one an undue advantage over the other; legislating for India as if the seat of empire were Calcutta, for Canada as if it were Quebec, for the West Indies as if it were Kingston. "Non alia Romæ alia Athenæ," should have been our maxim. Equal justice to all would have secured equal social happiness to all. The distress and want of employment consequent on the extension of machinery, and the growth of opulence in the heart of the empire, would have become the great moving power which would have overcome the attachments of home and country, and impelled the multitudes whom our transmarine dominions required into those distant but still British settlements, where ample room was to be found for their comfort and increase, and where their rapidly increasing numbers would have operated with powerful effect, and in a geometrical ratio, on the industry and happiness of the parent state. Protection to native industry at home and abroad was all that was required to bless and hold together the mighty fabric. So various and extensive were the British dominions, that they would soon have arrived at the point of being independent of all the rest of the world. The materials for our fabrics, the food for our people, were to be had in abundance in the different parts of our own dominions. We had no reason to fear the hostility or the stopping of supplies from any foreign power. The trade of almost the whole globe was to Great Britain a home trade, and brought with it its blessings and its double return, at each end of the chain.

These great and magnificent objects, which are as clearly pointed out by Providence as the mission of the British nation – and which the peculiar character of the Anglo-Saxon race so evidently qualified it to discharge – as if it had been declared in thunders from Mount Sinai, were in a great degree attained, though in an indirect way, under the old constitution of England; and accordingly, while it lasted, and was undisturbed in its action by local influences in the heart of the empire, distress was comparatively unknown at home, and disaffection was unheard of in our distant settlements. The proof of this is decisive. The tables already given in the former part of this paper demonstrate when distress at home and sedition abroad seriously set in, when emigration advanced with the steps of a

---

<sup>15</sup> Parliamentary Return, 1851.

giant, and crime began to increase ten times as fast as the numbers of the people – and the poor-rates, despite all attempts to check them by fresh laws, threatened to swallow all but the fortunes of the *millionnaires* in the kingdom. *It was after 1819 that all this took place.* Previous to this, or at least previous to 1816, when the approaching great monetary change of that year was intimated to the Bank, and the contraction of the currency really began, distress at home was comparatively unknown, and the most unbounded loyalty existed in our colonial settlements in every part of the world. But from that date our policy at home and abroad underwent a total change. Everything was changed with the change in the ruling influences in the state. The words of the Christian bishop who converted Clovis were acted upon to the letter – "Brulez ce que vous avez adoré; adorez ce que vous avez brulé." The moneyed came to supplant the territorial aristocracy, the interests of realised capital to prevail over those of industry and wealth in the course of formation. The Reform Bill confirmed and perpetuated this change, by giving the moneyed class a decided majority of votes in the House of Commons, and the House of Commons the practical government of the country. From that moment suffering marked us for her own. Misery spread in the heart of the empire; many of its most flourishing settlements abroad went to ruin; and such disaffection prevailed in all, that Government, foreseeing the dissolution of the empire, has already taken steps to conceal the fall of the fabric by voluntarily taking it to pieces.

Without going into details, unhappily too well known to all to require any lengthened illustration, it may be sufficient to refer to three circumstances which have not only immensely aggravated the internal distress and external disaffection of the empire, but interrupted and neutralised the influence of all those causes of relief provided for us by nature, and which, under a just and equal policy, would have entirely averted them.

The first of these, and perhaps the most disastrous in its effects upon the internal prosperity of the empire, was the great contraction of the currency which took place by the bill of 1819. By that bill the bank and bankers' notes, which at the close of the war had amounted, in Great Britain and Ireland, to about £60,000,000 in round numbers, were suddenly reduced to £32,000,000, which was the limit formally imposed, by the acts of 1844 and 1845, on the circulation issuable on securities in the country. We know the effect of these changes: the *Times* has told us what it has been. It rendered the sovereign worth two sovereigns; the fortune of £500,000 worth £1,000,000; the debt of £800,000,000 worth £1,600,000,000; the taxes of £50,000,000 worth £100,000,000 annually. As a necessary consequence, it reduced the average price of wheat from 90s. to 40s.; and the entire wages of labour and remuneration of industry, throughout the country, to *one-half* of their former amount. The prodigious effect of this change upon the real amount of the national burdens, and the remuneration of the industry which was to sustain it, may be judged of by the invaluable table quoted on the next page, which is stated to be taken from Mr Porter's valuable work on the *Progress of the Nation*, published in 1847, and furnished by that gentleman with his wonted courtesy to the *Midland Counties Herald*, to the end of 1850. Its import will be found to be correctly condensed in the following statement, by that able writer Gemini, contained in the same paper of January 30: —

	S.	D.
"The average price of wheat from 1800 to the close of the war, was,	90	7
The average price of wheat from the passing of the Corn Law of 1815 to 1827, each inclusive,	67	2
The average price of wheat from the passing of the Corn Law of 1828 to 1841, each inclusive,	58	10
The average price of wheat from the passing of the Corn Law of 1842 to 1849, each inclusive,	53	6
The average price of 1850	40	2

During the war the average quantity of wheat required to be sold to pay one million of taxation amounted to 220,791 quarters. The quantity required to be sold to pay one million of taxation, according to the prices of 1850, amounts to 497,925 quarters, or 56,343 quarters more than *double* the quantity required to be sold during

the war. The enormous increase in the burdensomeness of taxation may be thus clearly estimated."

Comment is unnecessary, illustration superfluous, on such a result.

Years.	Amount of revenue paid into the Exchequer, the produce of taxation.	Yearly average price of wheat per qr.		Revenue estimated in qrs. of wheat, at the average price of the year.	Rent of 200 acres of land, at 30s. per acre, estimated in qrs. of wheat.		Price of wheat at a seven years' average, per qr.	
	£	S.	D.	qrs.	qrs.	bus.	S.	D.
1800	34,145,584	113	10	5,999,224	52	5	...	
1801	34,113,146	119	6	5,709,313	50	1	...	
1802	36,368,149	69	10	10,415,698	85	7	...	
1803	38,609,392	58	10	13,125,005	101	7	...	
1804	46,176,492	62	3	14,835,820	96	5	...	
1805	50,897,706	89	9	11,342,107	66	6	...	
1806	55,796,086	79	1	14,110,706	75	6	84	8
1807	59,339,321	75	4	15,753,802	79	5	79	2
1808	62,998,191	81	4	15,491,358	73	5	73	7
1809	63,719,400	97	4	13,093,027	61	5	77	8
1810	67,144,542	106	5	12,619,177	56	3	84	5
1811	65,173,545	95	3	13,684,383	62	7	89	2
1812	65,037,850	126	6	10,282,604	47	4	94	5
1813	68,748,363	109	9	12,528,175	54	3	98	10
1814	71,134,503	74	4	19,139,328	80	6	98	8
1815	72,210,512	65	7	22,020,994	91	4	96	5
1816	62,264,546	78	6	15,863,578	76	3	93	7
1817	52,055,913	96	11	10,742,406	61	7	92	4
1818	53,747,795	86	3	12,463,256	69	4	91	6
1819	52,648,847	74	6	14,133,918	80	4	83	4
1820	54,282,958	67	10	16,004,803	88	5	77	8
1821	55,834,192	56	1	19,911,153	106	7	75	1
1822	55,663,650	44	7	24,970,609	134	7	72	1
1823	57,672,999	53	4	21,627,374	112	4	68	6
1824	59,362,403	63	11	18,574,937	93	7	63	9
1825	57,273,869	68	6	16,722,297	87	4	61	2
1826	54,894,989	58	8	18,714,200	102	2	58	11
1827	54,932,518	58	6	18,780,348	102	4	57	7
1828	55,187,142	60	5	18,268,847	99	2	58	3
1829	50,786,682	66	3	15,331,828	90	4	61	4
1830	50,056,616	64	3	15,581,825	93	4	62	11
1831	46,424,440	66	4	13,997,318	90	4	63	3
1832	46,988,755	58	8	16,018,893	102	2	61	10
1833	46,271,326	52	11	17,488,375	113	3	61	0
1834	46,425,263	46	2	20,112,027	130	0	59	3
1835	45,893,369	39	4	23,335,611	152	4	56	3
1836	48,591,180	48	6	20,037,600	123	6	53	8
1837	46,475,194	55	10	16,647,830	107	3	52	6
1838	47,333,460	64	7	14,658,103	92	7	52	3
1839	47,844,899	70	8	13,541,009	84	7	54	0
1840	47,567,565	66	4	14,341,979	90	3	55	11
1841	48,084,360	64	4	14,948,505	93	2	58	6
1842	46,965,631	57	3	16,407,207	104	6	61	0
1843	52,582,817	50	1	20,998,129	119	6	61	3
1844	54,003,754	51	3	21,074,635	117	0	60	7
1845	53,060,354	50	10	20,876,204	118	0	58	8
1846	53,790,138	54	8	19,679,318	109	6	56	4
1847	51,546,265	69	9	14,780,291	86	0	56	10
1848	53,388,717	50	6	21,144,046	118	7	54	10
1849	52,951,749	44	3	23,932,993	135	4	53	0
1850	...	40	2	...	149	3	51	6

– *Midland Counties Herald*, January 31, 1851. The prices of wheat here given are the *average* prices of the year.

In the next place, prodigious as was the addition which this great change made to the burdens, public and private, of the nation, the change was attended with an alteration at times still more hurtful, and, in the end, not less pernicious. This was the compelling the bank to pay *all* their notes in gold, the restraining them from issuing paper beyond £14,000,000 bond on securities, and compelling them to take all gold brought to them, whatever its market value was, at the fixed price of £3, 17s. 10½d. the ounce. This at once aggravated speculation to a most fearful degree in periods of prosperity, for it left the bank no way of indemnifying itself for the purchase and retention of £15,000,000 or £16,000,000 worth of treasure but by pushing its business in all directions, and lowering its discounts so as to accomplish that object; and it led to a rapid and ruinous contraction of the currency the moment that exchanges became adverse, and a drain set in upon the bank, either from the necessities of foreign war in the neighbouring states, the mutation of commerce, or the occurrence of a large importation of grain to supply the wants of our own country. Incalculable as the distress which those alternations of impulse and depression have brought upon this great manufacturing community, and immeasurable the multitudes whom they have sunk, never more to rise, into the lowest and most destitute classes of society, their effect has by no means been confined to the periods during which they actually lasted. Their baneful influence has extended to subsequent times, and produced a continuous and almost unbroken stream of distress; for, long ere the victims of one monetary crisis have sunk into the grave, or been driven into exile, another storm arises which precipitates fresh multitudes, especially in the manufacturing towns, into the abyss of ruin. The whole, or nearly the whole, of this terrific and continued suffering is to be ascribed to the monstrous principles adopted in our monetary system – that of compelling the banks to foster and encourage speculation in periods of prosperity, and suddenly contract their issues and starve the body politic, when a demand for the precious metals carries them in considerable quantities out of the country. A memorable instance of the working of that system is to be found in the Railway mania of 1845 and 1846, flowing directly from the Acts of 1844 and 1845, which landed the nation in an extra expenditure of nearly £300,000,000 on domestic undertakings, at a time when commerce of every kind was in a state of the highest activity, followed by the dreadful crash of October 1847, which, by suddenly contracting the currency and ruining credit, threw millions out of employment, and strained the real capital of the nation to the very uttermost, to complete a part only of the undertakings which the Currency Laws had given birth to. And the example of the years 1809 and 1810 – when the whole metallic currency was drained out of the country by the demands for the war in the Peninsula and Germany, but no distress was experienced, and the national strength was put forth with unparalleled vigour, and, as it proved, decisive effect – proves how easily such a crisis might be averted by the extended issue of a paper currency not liable to be withdrawn, when most required, by a public run for gold.

In the third place, to crown the whole, and as if to put the keystone in the arch of public distress, Free-Trade in every department was forced upon the country by Sir Robert Peel and his successors in 1846, 1847, and 1849, under the dictation of the Manchester school, and to promote the interest of master-manufacturers by lowering the wages of labour and of realised capital, by cheapening the price of everything else, and raising the value of money. We see the effects of this already evinced in every department to which the system has applied; and we see the commencement only of the general ruin with which it is fraught. In agriculture, Great Britain and Ireland, which were, practically speaking, in ordinary seasons self-supporting, have come already to import from *nine to ten millions* of foreign grain for the support of the inhabitants, besides sheep and cattle in an equal proportion. At least fifteen millions yearly is sent out of the country, for the most part in hard cash, to buy food, which formerly was nearly all spent in it, and enriched all classes of its people. The exchangeable value of what remains has been lowered by at least £75,000,000 annually, and of course so much taken away from the means of supporting domestic labour, and paying the national defences and the interest of public and private debt. The West Indies, formerly the right arm of the naval strength of England, and no small source of its riches, have been *totally ruined*; and, as a necessary consequence, the exports

of our manufactures to those once splendid settlements, which, prior to the commencement of the new measures in 1834, had reached £3,500,000 a-year, had sunk in 1850 to £1,821,146! Canada has been so much impoverished by the withdrawing of all protection to colonial industry, which has annihilated its intercolonial trade with the West Indies, and seriously injured its export trade in grain and wood to this country, that the British exports to that country, which in 1839 amounted to £3,047,000, had sunk in 1850, notwithstanding the subsequent addition of above 50 per cent to its population, to £2,280,386.

EXPORTS TO		
	Canada.	West Indies.
1839	L.3,047,671	L.3,986,598
1840	2,847,970	3,574,970
1841	2,947,061	3,504,004
1850	2,280,386	1,821,146

In Ireland from four to five hundred thousand acres have gone out of the cultivation of wheat alone; although the calamitous failure of the potato crop in 1846, and the subsequent doubts as to the success of that prolific esculent, should have tended to an *increase* of cereal crops as the only thing that could be relied on, and undoubtedly would have done so, but for the blasting influence of Free Trade, which deprived the farmer of all hope of a profitable return for agricultural expenditure. As a necessary consequence, above 200,000 cultivators have disappeared from the soil of the Emerald Isle in the four last years; about 250,000 of them or their families are immured, idle and miserable, in the Irish workhouses, and above 40,000 in its prisons; while above 200,000 persons from that island alone, and 300,000 from the two islands, are annually driven into exile! Lastly, as if Free Trade had not worked sufficient mischief on the land, it has invaded the sea also; no longer can the Englishman say —

"His march is on the mountain wave  
His home is on the deep."

The ocean is fast becoming the home for other people, to the exclusion of its ancient lords. One single year of Free Trade in shipping, following the repeal of the Navigation Laws, has occasioned, under the most favourable circumstances for testing the tendency of the change, so great a diminution in British and increase in foreign shipping in all our harbours, that it is evident the time is rapidly approaching, if the present system is continued, when we must renounce all thought of maintaining naval superiority, and trust to the tender mercies of our enemies and rivals for a respite from the evils of blockade and famine.<sup>16</sup>

The vast emigration of 300,000 annually which is now going on from the United Kingdom, might reasonably be expected to have alleviated, in a great degree, this most calamitous decrease in the staple branches of industry in our people; and so it would have, certainly, had a wise and paternal Government taken it under its own direction, and sent the parties abroad who really were likely to want employment, and whose removal would at once prove a relief to the country from which they were sent, and a blessing to that for which they were destined. But this is so far from being the case, that there is perhaps no one circumstance in our social condition which has done more of late years to aggravate the want of employment, and enhance the distress among the working-classes, than *the very magnitude of this emigration*. The dogma of Free Trade has involved even the humble cabins of

---

<sup>16</sup> The following Returns from three seaports alone – London, Liverpool, and Dublin – in 1849 and 1850, will show how rapidly this ruinous process is going on: —

the emigrant's ship: there, as elsewhere, it has spread nothing but misery and desolation. The reason is, that it has been left to the unaided, undirected efforts of the emigrants themselves.

Government was too glad of an excuse not to interfere: the constantly destitute condition of the Treasury, and the ceaseless clamour against taxation, in consequence of the wasting away of the national resources under the action of Free Trade and a contracted currency, made them too happy of any excuse for avoiding any payments from the public Treasury, even on behalf of the most suffering and destitute of the community. This excuse was found in the plausible plea, that any advances on their part would interfere with the free exercise of individual enterprise – a plea somewhat similar to what it would be if all laws for the protection of paupers, minors, and lunatics, were swept away, lest the free action of the creditors on their estates should be disturbed. The consequence has been that the whole, or nearly the whole, of the immense stream of emigration which general distress has now caused to flow from the British Islands, has been sustained by the efforts of private individuals, and left to the tender mercies of the owners or freighters of emigrant ships. The result is well known. Frightful disasters, from imperfect manning and equipment, have occurred to several of these misery-laden vessels. A helpless multitude is thrown ashore at New York and Montreal, destitute alike of food, clothing, or the means of getting on to the frontier, where its labour could be of value; and the competition for employment at home has been increased to a frightful degree by the removal of so large a proportion of such of the tenantry or middle class as were possessed of little capitals; and had the means either of maintaining themselves or giving employment to others. At least L.3,000,000 yearly goes abroad with the emigrant ships, and that is drawn almost entirely from the lower class of farmers, the very men who employ the poor. The class who have gone away was for the most part that which should have remained, for it had the means of doing, something in the world, and employing others; that which was left at home, was that which should have been removed, because they were the destitute who could neither find employment in these islands, nor do anything on their own account from want of funds. Hence above a million and a-half of persons in Great Britain, and above seven hundred thousand in Ireland, on an average of years, are constantly maintained by the poor-rates, for the most part in utter idleness, although the half of them are able-bodied, and their labour – if they could only be forwarded to the frontier of civilisation in America – would be of incalculable service to our own colonies or the United States.

The very magnitude of the trade employed in the exportation of the emigrants, and the importation of food for those who remain, has gone far to conceal the ruinous effects of Free Trade. Between the carrying out of emigrants, and the bringing in of grain – the exportation of our strength, and the importation of our weakness – our chief seaports may continue for some time to drive a gainful traffic. The *Liverpool Times* observes: —

"The number of emigrant vessels which sailed from Liverpool during the last year, was 568. Of these vessels, many are from 1500 to 2000 tons burden, and a few of them even reach 3000 tons. They are amongst the finest vessels that ever were built, are well commanded, well-manned, fitted out in excellent style, and present a wonderful improvement in all respects, when compared with the same class of vessels even half a dozen years ago. Taking the average passage-money of each passenger in these vessels at £6, the conveying of emigrants yields a revenue of upwards of £1,000,000 sterling to the shipping which belongs to or frequents this port, independent of the great amount of money which the passage of such an immense multitude of persons through the town must cause to be spent in it. In fact, the passage and conveyance of emigrants has become one of the greatest trades of Liverpool." —*Liverpool Times*, Jan. 10, 1851.

The number of emigrants from the Mersey and the Clyde, since the days of Free Trade began, have been prodigious, and rapidly increasing. They have stood thus: —

Year.	Liverpool.	Clyde.
1847	134,524	7,728
1848	131,121	10,035
1849	153,902	14,968
1850	174,187	14,203

It was precisely the same in the declining days of the Roman empire – the great seaport towns continued to flourish when all other interests in the state were rapidly sinking; and when the plains in the interior were desolate, or tenanted only by the ox or the buffalo, the great cities were still the abodes of vast realised wealth and unbounded private luxury. We are rapidly following in the same path. The realised capital of Great Britain was estimated in 1814 at L.1,200,000,000; in 1841, Mr Porter estimated it at L.2,000,000,000; the capital subject to legacy duty in Great Britain, on an average of forty-one years, from 1797 to 1841, was L.26,000,000; in the single year 1840 it was L.40,500,000. The increase of realised capital among the rich has been nearly as great as that of pauperism, misery, and consequent emigration among the poor – the well-known and oft-observed premonitory symptoms of the decline of nations.

It is in the midst of these numerous and overwhelming evils, the result mainly of theoretical innovation and class government in the country – when above two millions of paupers in the two islands are painfully supported by public assessment; when three hundred thousand are annually driven into exile, and a hundred and fifty thousand more are constantly supported in jails, one-half of whom are committed for serious crimes;<sup>17</sup> when all classes, excepting those engaged in the export trade of human beings and the import of human food, are languishing from the decline of domestic employment, and the constantly increasing influx of foreign goods, both rude and manufactured – that we are assured by one benevolent set of philanthropists that all will be right, if we only give the starving working-classes model houses, rented at L.8 each, to live in; by another, that ragged schools for their destitute children will set all in order; by a third, that a schoolmaster in every wynd is alone required to remove all the evils under which we labour; by a fourth, that cold baths and wash-houses to lave their emaciated limbs, are the great thing; by a fifth, that church extension is the only effectual remedy, and that, till there is a minister for every seven hundred inhabitants, it is in vain to hope for any social amelioration. We respect the motives which actuate each and all of these benevolent labourers in the great vineyard of human suffering; we acknowledge that each within a limited sphere does some good, and extricates a certain number of individuals or families out of the abyss of degradation or suffering in which they are immersed. As to anything like national relief, or alleviation of distress in any sensible degree, from their united efforts, when the great causes of evil which have been mentioned continue in undiminished activity, it is as chimerical as to expect by the schoolmaster or the washing-woman to arrest the ravages of the plague or the cholera.

Two circumstances of general operation, and overwhelming importance, render all these various and partial remedies, while the great causes which depress the demand for labour and deprive the people of employment continue in operation, entirely nugatory and ineffectual, in a general view, to arrest our social evils.

The first of these is, that these remedies, one and all of them, are calculated for the elevation and intellectual or moral improvement of the people, but have no tendency to improve their circumstances, or diminish the load of pauperism, destitution, and misery with which they are overwhelmed. Until the latter is done, however, all the efforts made for the attainment of the former, how benevolent and praiseworthy soever, will have no general effect, and, in a national point of view, may be regarded as almost equal to nothing. The reason is that, generally speaking, the human race are governed,

---

<sup>17</sup> Including the police committals, much more numerous than those for trial.



in the first instance, almost entirely by their physical sufferings or comforts, and that intellectual or moral improvement cannot be either thought of or attended to till a certain degree of ease as to the imperious demands of physical nature has been attained. In every age, doubtless, there are some persons of both sexes who will heroically struggle against the utmost physical privation, and pursue the path of virtue, or sedulously improve their minds, under circumstances the most adverse, and with facilities the most inconsiderable. But these are the exceptions, not the rule. The number of such persons is so inconsiderable, compared to the immense mass who are governed by their physical sensations, that remedies addressed to the intellect of man, without reference to the improvement of his circumstances, can never operate generally upon society. Even the most intellectual and powerful minds must give way under a certain amount of physical want or necessity. Take Newton and Milton, Bacon and Descartes, Cervantes and Cicero, and make them walk thirty miles in a wintry day, and come in to a wretched hovel at night, and see what they will desire. Rely upon it, it will be neither philosophy nor poetry, but warmth and food. A good fire and a good supper would attract them from all the works which have rendered their names immortal. Can we expect the great body of mankind to be less under the influence of the imperious demands of our common physical nature than the most gifted of the human race? What do the people constantly ask for? It is neither cold baths nor warm baths, ragged schools nor normal schools, churches nor chapels, model houses nor mechanics' institutes – "It is a fair day's wage for a fair day's work." We would all do the same in their circumstances. Give them *that*, the one thing needful alike for social happiness and moral improvement, and you make a mighty step in social amelioration and elevation; because you lay *the foundation* on which it all rests, and on which it must, in a general point of view, all depend – without it, all the rest will be found to be as much thrown away as the seed cast on the arid desert.

In the next place, the intellectual cultivation and elevation which is regarded by so large a political party, and so numerous a body of benevolent individuals, as the panacea for all our social evils, never has affected, and never can affect, more than a limited class in society. We may indeed teach all, or nearly all, to read; but can we make them all read books, or still more, read books that will do them any good, when they leave school, and become their own masters, and are involved in the cares, oppressed with the labours, and exposed to the temptations of the world? Did any man ever find a fifth of his acquaintance of any rank, from the House of Peers and the Bar downwards, who were really and practically directed in manhood and womanhood by intellectual pleasures or pursuits? Habit, early training, easy circumstances, absence of temptation, a fortunate marriage, or the like, are the real circumstances which retain the great body of the human race of every rank in the right path. They are neither positively bad, nor positively good: they are characters of imperfect goodness, and mainly swayed by their physical circumstances. If you come to a crisis with them, when the selfish or generous feelings must be acted upon, nine-tenths of them will be swayed by the former. The disciples of Rousseau will contest these propositions: we would only recommend them to look around them, and see whether or not they are demonstrated by every day's experience in every rank of life. We wish it were otherwise; but we must take mankind as they are, and legislate for them on their *average* capacity, without supposing that they are generally to be influenced by the intellectual appliances adapted only to a small fraction of their number. And, accordingly, upon looking at the statistical tables given in the commencement of this Essay, it will be found that, while emigration, crime, and pauperism, have advanced rapidly, despite all the efforts of philanthropy and religion, which are *permanent*, but affect only a part of society, they exhibit the most remarkable fluctuations, according to the prosperity or distress of *particular* years, because the causes *then* in operation affected the *whole* of mankind.

The only way, therefore, in which the physical circumstances of the great body of mankind can be ameliorated, or room can be afforded for the moral and intellectual elevation of such of them as have received from nature minds susceptible of such training, is by restoring *the equilibrium between the demand for labour and the numbers of the people*, which our late measures have done so much

to subvert. By that means, and that means *alone*, can the innumerable social evils under which we labour be alleviated. Without it, all the other remedies devised by philanthropy, pursued with zeal, cherished by hope, will prove ineffectual. How that is to be done must be evident to every person of common understanding. The demand for labour must be increased, the supply of labour must be diminished. The first can only be done, by a moderate degree of Protection to Native Industry, at present beat down to the dust in every department by the competition of foreign states, where money is more scarce and taxation lighter, and consequently production is less expensive. The second can only be attained by a systematic emigration, conducted at the public expense, and drawing of annually an hundred or an hundred and fifty thousand of the *most destitute* of the community, who have not the means of transport for themselves, and, if not so removed, will permanently encumber our streets, our jails, our workhouses.

But money is required for these things; and where, it will be asked, is money to be found in this already overtaxed and suffering community? The answer is, the money-question is the easiest of all; for it will be attained in abundance by the very means requisite to attain the other objects. Protection, even on the most moderate scale, to Native Industry, is not to be attained without the imposition of import-duties; and that will at once produce the funds requisite for the attainment of all these objects. Laid on the importation of all goods, rude or manufactured, they would yield such a revenue as would enable us to take off the Income Tax, and thereby let loose L.5,500,000 a-year, now absorbed by it, for the encouragement of domestic industry. Agriculture, manufactures of all sorts, would take a renewed start from the exclusion, to a certain degree, of foreign competition. Domestic industry would cease to languish, because the ruinous competition of foreigners working at a third of our wages would be checked. By these means an ample fund would be raised to enable us to transport, at the public expense, and comfortably settle in their new habitations, some hundred thousand annually of the most destitute class of our people – that class who cannot get away themselves, and, as they are thrown out of employment by Free Trade, now encumber our hospitals, jails, and workhouses. We would convert them from paupers into healthful and sturdy emigrants, doubling in numbers, with constant additions from the parent state, every ten years; and consuming L.8 a-head worth of our manufactures. Property in the colonies would double in value every five years, from the joint effect of domestic labour, and the prolific stream of external immigration; and every acre cleared in these fertile wilds would cause a wheel to revolve, or a spindle to move, or a family to be blessed, in the parent state.

We can affix no limits in imagination to what the British Empire might become, or the amount of social and general happiness it might contain, with the physical advantages which nature has given it, and the character which race, and consequent institutions, have impressed upon its inhabitants. In the centre of the Empire stands the parent state, teeming with energy, overflowing with inhabitants, with coal and ironstone in its bosom capable of putting in motion manufactories for the supply of half the globe. In the extremities are colonies in every quarter of the earth, possessing waste lands of boundless extent and inexhaustible fertility, producing every luxury which the heart of man can desire, and one only of which could furnish the whole staple required for its greatest fabrics.<sup>18</sup> With such providential wisdom were the various parts of this immense empire fitted for each other; so marvellously was the surplus, whether in animated beings or rude produce, of one part adapted to the deficiencies and wants of another, that nothing but a just and equal system of government, alive

---

<sup>18</sup> "At present the native consumption of cotton in India is estimated at from 1,000,000,000 lb. to 3,000,000,000 lb. annually; while the export to Great Britain is only 60,000,000 lb., and to all the world only 150,000,000 lb. In this state of things, the rough production that suits the home market will, of course, only be carried on; while, if sufficient means of conveyance existed to render the cotton that is now grown in the interior, at 1¼d. per lb., remunerative for export, increased care in its preparation would be manifested, as was the case in the United States, just in proportion to the increased reward that would result. In developing these views, Mr Chapman undertakes to demonstrate, by well-arranged facts and tables, that the export of cotton from India to England has risen exactly as the difficulties or expense of its transmission have been diminished; and also that costs and impediments still remain which are sufficient to account for the smallness of the quantity we continue to receive." —*Times*, Jan. 1851.

to the wants, and solicitous for the interests, of every part of its vast dominion, was requisite to render it the most united, prosperous, growing, and powerful state that ever existed on the face of the earth. The Roman Empire, while spread around the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, affords but a faint image of what it might have been. *The ocean was its inland lake*; the British navy its internal means of communication; the foreign trade of the whole earth its home trade. We obtained the empire of the seas precisely to enable us to carry out this magnificent destiny; the victory of Trafalgar presented it to our grasp. But a just and equal system of government was essential to the existence and duration of so immense a dominion; a sense of fair administration, a consciousness of protected interests, would alone hold it together for any length of time. The simple precept of the gospel, "to do to others as we would they should do unto us," would, if duly carried into practice, have for ever kept united the mighty fabric, and caused it to embrace in peace and happiness half the globe. This object was practically attained by the virtual representation of all classes, interests, and colonies, under the old constitution; and thence the steady growth, vast extent, and unvarying loyalty during many a severe contest, of this multifarious dominion. The new constitution, by vesting the government in the representatives of our manufacturing towns, and thence introducing the rule of class interests, is visibly and rapidly destroying it. The only remedy practicable – and even that is so only for a short season – is the *extension to the colonies of a direct share in the Imperial Parliament*; but that is far too just and wise a measure to permit the hope that it will ever be embraced by the class interest who now rule the state.

Notwithstanding all the obvious advantages of the course of policy which we have recommended – though it would at once furnish the means, as we have shown in a former paper, of obviating our external dangers and maintaining our national independence, and at the same time relieve our internal distresses and extend and consolidate our colonial dependencies – we have scarcely any hope that it will be adopted. The Free-traders have got such a hold of the burghs – to which the Reform Bill gave a decided majority in the House of Commons – and their leaders so perseveringly pursue their own *immediate* interest, without the slightest regard to the ruin they are bringing upon all other interests of the state, that the hope of any change of policy – at least till some terrible external disaster has opened the eyes of the nation to a sense of the impending calamities brought on them by their rulers – may be regarded as hopeless, without a general national effort. The imposition of a moderate import duty upon the produce, whether rude or manufactured, of all other nations, but with an entire exemption to our own colonies, is obviously the first step in the right direction, and would go far to alleviate our distresses, and at the same time replenish the public Treasury and avert our external dangers. In taking it, we should only be following the example of America, Prussia, and nearly all other nations, who levy a duty of 30 per cent on our manufactures, and thereby make us pay half of their taxes. But it is to be feared the mania of Free Trade will prevail over a wise and expedient policy, calculated equally to advance the interests of all classes in the state. We do not say, therefore, that any such system will be adopted; but this we do say, and with these words we nail our colours to the mast, – Protection must be restored, or the British empire will be destroyed.

## MY NOVEL; OR, VARIETIES IN ENGLISH LIFE BY PISISTRATUS CAXTON

### BOOK IV. – INITIAL CHAPTER: – COMPRISING MR CAXTON'S OPINIONS ON THE MATRIMONIAL STATE, SUPPORTED BY LEARNED AUTHORITIES

"It was no bad idea of yours, Pisistratus," said my father graciously, "to depict the heightened affections and the serious intention's of Signior Riccabocca by a single stroke — *He left off his spectacles!* Good."

"Yet," quoth my uncle, "I think Shakspeare represents a lover as falling into slovenly habits, neglecting his person, and suffering his hose to be ungartered, rather than paying that attention to his outer man which induces Signior Riccabocca to leave off his spectacles, and look as handsome as nature will permit him."

"There are different degrees and many phases of the passion," replied my father. "Shakspeare is speaking of an ill-treated, pining, wobegone lover, much aggrieved by the cruelty of his mistress – a lover who has found it of no avail to smarten himself up, and has fallen despondently into the opposite extreme. Whereas Signior Riccabocca has nothing to complain of in the barbarity of Miss Jemima."

"Indeed he has not!" cried Blanche, tossing her head – "forward creature!"

"Yes, my dear," said my mother, trying her best to look stately, "I am decidedly of opinion that, in that respect, Pisistratus has lowered the dignity of the sex. Not intentionally," added my mother mildly, and afraid she had said something too bitter; "but it is very hard for a man to describe us women."

The Captain nodded approvingly; Mr Squills smiled; my father quietly resumed the thread of his discourse.

"To continue," quoth he. "Riccabocca has no reason to despair of success in his suit, nor any object in moving his mistress to compassion. He may, therefore, very properly tie up his garters and leave off his spectacles. What do you say, Mr Squills? – for, after all, since love-making cannot fail to be a great constitutional derangement, the experience of a medical man must be the best to consult."

"Mr Caxton," replied Squills, obviously flattered, "you are quite right: when a man makes love, the organs of self-esteem and desire of applause are greatly stimulated, and therefore, of course, he sets himself off to the best advantage. It is only, as you observe, when, like Shakspeare's lover, he has given up making love as a bad job, and has received that severe hit on the ganglions which the cruelty of a mistress inflicts, that he neglects his personal appearance: he neglects it, not because he is in love, but because his nervous system is depressed. That was the cause, if you remember, with poor Major Prim. He wore his wig all awry when Susan Smart jilted him; but I set it all right for him."

"By shaming Miss Smart into repentance, or getting him a new sweetheart?" asked my uncle.

"Pooh!" answered Squills, "by quinine and cold bathing."

"We may therefore grant," renewed my father, "that, as a general rule, the process of courtship tends to the spruceness, and even foppery, of the individual engaged in the experiment, as Voltaire has very prettily proved somewhere. Nay, the Mexicans, indeed, were of opinion that the lady at least ought to continue those cares of her person even after marriage. There is extant, in Sahagun's *History of New Spain*, the advice of an Aztec or Mexican mother to her daughter, in which she says – 'That your husband may not take you in dislike, adorn yourself, wash yourself, and let your garments be clean.' It is true that the good lady adds, – 'Do it in moderation; since, if every day you are washing yourself and your clothes, the world will say that you are over-delicate; and particular people will call

you – TAPETZON TINEMÁXOCH!" What those words precisely mean," added my father modestly, "I cannot say, since I never had the opportunity to acquire the ancient Aztec language – but something very opprobrious and horrible, no doubt."

"I daresay a philosopher like Signior Riccabocca," said my uncle, "was not himself very *Tapetzon tine* – what d'ye call it? – and a good healthy English wife, like that poor affectionate Jemima, was thrown away upon him."

"Roland," said my father, "you don't like foreigners: a respectable prejudice, and quite natural in a man who has been trying his best to hew them in pieces, and blow them up into splinters. But you don't like philosophers either – and for that dislike you have no equally good reason."

"I only implied that they were not much addicted to soap and water," said my uncle.

"A notable mistake. Many great philosophers have been very great beaux. Aristotle was a notorious fop. Buffon put on his best laced ruffles when he sat down to write, which implies that he washed his hands first. Pythagoras insists greatly on the holiness of frequent ablutions; and Horace – who, in his own way, was as good a philosopher as any the Romans produced – takes care to let us know what a neat, well-dressed, dapper little gentleman he was. But I don't think you ever read the 'Apology of Apuleius?'"

"Not I – what is it about?" asked the Captain.

"About a great many things. It is that Sage's vindication from several malignant charges – amongst others, and principally indeed, that of being much too refined and effeminate for a philosopher. Nothing can exceed the rhetorical skill with which he excuses himself for using – tooth-powder. 'Ought a philosopher,' he exclaims, 'to allow anything unclean about him, especially in the mouth – the mouth, which is the vestibule of the soul, the gate of discourse, the portico of thought! Ah, but Æmilianus [the accuser of Apuleius] never opens *his* mouth but for slander and calumny – tooth-powder would indeed be unbecoming to *him*! Or, if he use any, it will not be my good Arabian tooth-powder but charcoal and cinders. Ay, his teeth should be as foul as his language! And yet even the crocodile likes to have his teeth cleaned; insects get into them, and, horrible reptile though he be, he opens his jaws inoffensively to a faithful dentistical bird, who volunteers his beak for a toothpick.'"

My father was now warm in the subject he had started, and soared miles away from Riccabocca and "My Novel." "And observe," he exclaimed – "observe with what gravity this eminent Platonist pleads guilty to the charge of having a mirror. 'Why, what,' he exclaims, 'more worthy of the regards of a human creature than his own image,' (*nihil respectabilius homini quam formam suam!*) Is not that one of our children the most dear to us who is called 'the picture of his father?' But take what pains you will with a picture, it can never be so like you as the face in your mirror! Think it discreditable to look with proper attention on one's-self in the glass! Did not Socrates recommend such attention to his disciples – did he not make a great moral agent of the speculum? The handsome, in admiring their beauty therein, were admonished that handsome is who handsome does; and the more the ugly stared at themselves, the more they became naturally anxious to hide the disgrace of their features in the loveliness of their merits. Was not Demosthenes always at his speculum? Did he not rehearse his causes before it as before a master in the art? He learned his eloquence from Plato, his dialectics from Eubulides; but as for his delivery – there, he came to the mirror!"

"Therefore," concluded Mr Caxton, returning unexpectedly to the subject – "therefore it is no reason to suppose that Dr Riccabocca is averse to cleanliness and decent care of the person, because he is a philosopher; and, all things considered, he never showed himself more a philosopher than when he left off his spectacles and looked his best."

"Well," said my mother kindly, "I only hope it may turn out happily. But I should have been better pleased if Pisistratus had not made Dr Riccabocca so reluctant a wooer."

"Very true," said the Captain; "the Italian does not shine as a lover. Throw a little more fire into him, Pisistratus – something gallant and chivalrous."

"Fire – gallantry – chivalry!" cried my father, who had taken Riccabocca under his special protection – "why, don't you see that the man is described as a philosopher? – and I should like to know when a philosopher ever plunged into matrimony without considerable misgivings and cold shivers. Indeed, it seems that – perhaps before he was a philosopher – Riccabocca *had* tried the experiment, and knew what it was. Why, even that plain-speaking, sensible, practical man, Metellus Numidicus, who was not even a philosopher, but only a Roman Censor, thus expressed himself in an exhortation to the People to perpetrate matrimony – 'If, O Quirites, we could do without wives, we should all dispense with that subject of care, (*eâ molestiâ careremus*;) but since nature has so managed it, that we cannot live with women comfortably, nor without them at all, let us rather provide for the human race than our own temporary felicity.'"

Here the ladies set up a cry of such indignation, that both Roland and myself endeavoured to appease their wrath by hasty assurances that we utterly repudiated that damnable doctrine of Metellus Numidicus.

My father, wholly unmoved, as soon as a sullen silence was established, recommenced – "Do not think, ladies," said he, "that you were without advocates at that day: there were many Romans gallant enough to blame the Censor for a mode of expressing himself which they held to be equally impolite and injudicious. 'Surely,' said they, with some plausibility, 'if Numidicus wished men to marry, he need not have referred so peremptorily to the disquietudes of the connection, and thus have made them more inclined to turn away from matrimony than given them a relish for it.' But against these critics one honest man (whose name of Titus Castricius should not be forgotten by Posterity) maintained that Metellus Numidicus could not have spoken more properly; 'For remark,' said he, 'that Metellus was a censor, not a rhetorician. It becomes rhetoricians to adorn, and disguise, and make the best of things; but Metellus, *sanctus vir*— a holy and blameless man, grave and sincere to whit, and addressing the Roman people in the solemn capacity of Censor – was bound to speak the plain truth, especially as he was treating of a subject on which the observation of every day, and the experience of every life, could not leave the least doubt upon the mind of his audience.' Still Riccabocca, having decided to marry, has no doubt prepared himself to bear all the concomitant evils – as becomes a professed sage; and I own I admire the art with which Pisistratus has drawn the precise woman likely to suit a philosopher."

Pisistratus bows, and looks round complacently; but recoils from two very peevish and discontented faces feminine.

Mr Caxton (completing his sentence,) – "Not only as regards mildness of temper and other household qualifications, but as regards the very *person* of the object of his choice. For you evidently remembered, Pisistratus, the reply of Bias, when asked his opinion on marriage: "Ἦτοι καλὴν ἔξεις, ἢ αἰσχρὰν· καὶ εἰ καλὴν, ἔξεις κοινήν· εἰ δὲ αἰσχρὰν, ἔξεις ποινήν."

Pisistratus tries to look as if he had the opinion of Bias by heart, and nods acquiescingly.

Mr Caxton. – "That is, my dears, 'the woman you would marry is either handsome or ugly: if handsome, she is *koiné*, viz. you don't have her to yourself; if ugly, she is *poiné* – that is, a fury.' But, as it is observed in Aulus Gellius, (whence I borrow this citation,) there is a wide interval between handsome and ugly. And thus Ennius, in his tragedy of *Menalippus*, uses an admirable expression to designate women of the proper degree of matrimonial comeliness, such as a philosopher would select. He calls this degree *stata forma*— a rational, mediocre sort of beauty, which is not liable to be either *koiné* or *poiné*. And Favorinus, who was a remarkably sensible man, and came from Provence – the male inhabitants of which district have always valued themselves on their knowledge of love and ladies – calls this said *stata forma* the beauty of wives – the uxorial beauty. Ennius says, that women of a *stata forma* are almost always safe and modest. Now Jemima, you observe, is described as possessing this *stata forma*; and it is the nicety of your observation in this respect, which I like the most in the whole of your description of a philosopher's matrimonial courtship, Pisistratus, (excepting

only the stroke of the spectacles,) for it shows that you had properly considered the opinion of Bias, and mastered all the counter logic suggested in Book v. chapter xi., of Aulus Gellius."

"For all that," said Blanche, half-archly, half-demurely, with a smile in the eye, and a pout of the lip, "I don't remember that Pisistratus, in the days when he wished to be most complimentary, ever assured me that I had a *stata forma*— a rational, mediocre sort of beauty."

"And I think," observed my uncle, "that when he comes to his real heroine, whoever that may be, he will not trouble his head much about either Bias or Aulus Gellius."

## CHAPTER II

Matrimony is certainly a great change in life. One is astonished not to find a notable alteration in one's friend, even if he or she have been only wedded a week. In the instance of Dr and Mrs Riccabocca the change was peculiarly visible. To speak first of the lady, as in chivalry bound, Mrs Riccabocca had entirely renounced that melancholy which had characterised Miss Jemima: she became even sprightly and gay, and looked all the better and prettier for the alteration. She did not scruple to confess honestly to Mrs Dale, that she was now of opinion that the world was very far from approaching its end. But, in the meanwhile, she did not neglect the duty which the belief she had abandoned serves to inculcate – "She set her house in order." The cold and penurious elegance that had characterised the Casino disappeared like enchantment – that is, the elegance remained, but the cold and penury fled before the smile of woman. Like Puss-in-Boots after the nuptials of his master, Jackeymo only now caught minnows and sticklebacks for his own amusement. Jackeymo looked much plumper, and so did Riccabocca. In a word, the fair Jemima became an excellent wife. Riccabocca secretly thought her extravagant, but, like a wise man, declined to look at the house bills, and ate his joint in unapproachable silence.

Indeed, there was so much unaffected kindness in the nature of Mrs Riccabocca – beneath the quiet of her manner there beat so genially the heart of the Hazeldeans – that she fairly justified the favourable anticipations of Mrs Dale. And though the Doctor did not noisily boast of his felicity, nor, as some new married folks do, thrust it insultingly under the *nimis unctis naribus* – the turned-up noses of your surly old married folks, nor force it gaudily and glaringly on the envious eyes of the single, you might still see that he was a more cheerful and light-hearted man than before. His smile was less ironical, his politeness less distant. He did not study Machiavelli so intensely, – and he did not return to the spectacles; which last was an excellent sign. Moreover, the humanising influence of the tidy English wife might be seen in the improvement of his outward or artificial man. His clothes seemed to fit him better; indeed, the clothes were new. Mrs Dale no longer remarked that the buttons were off the wrist-bands, which was a great satisfaction to her. But the sage still remained faithful to the pipe, the cloak, and the red silk umbrella. Mrs Riccabocca had (to her credit be it spoken) used all becoming and wifelike arts against these three remnants of the old bachelor Adam, but in vain. "*Anima mia* – soul of mine," said the Doctor tenderly, "I hold the cloak, the umbrella, and the pipe, as the sole relics that remain to me of my native country. Respect and spare them."

Mrs Riccabocca was touched, and had the good sense to perceive that man, let him be ever so much married, retains certain signs of his ancient independence – certain tokens of his old identity, which a wife, the most despotic, will do well to concede. She conceded the cloak, she submitted to the umbrella, she concealed her abhorrence of the pipe. After all, considering the natural villany of our sex, she confessed to herself that she might have been worse off. But, through all the calm and cheerfulness of Riccabocca, a nervous perturbation was sufficiently perceptible; – it commenced after the second week of marriage – it went on increasing, till one bright sunny afternoon, as he was standing on his terrace gazing down upon the road, at which Jackeymo was placed, – lo, a stage-coach stopped! The Doctor made a bound, and put both hands to his heart as if he had been shot; he then leapt over the balustrade, and his wife from her window beheld him flying down the hill, with his long hair streaming in the wind, till the trees hid him from her sight.

"Ah," thought she with a natural pang of conjugal jealousy, "henceforth I am only second in his home. He has gone to welcome his child!" And at that reflection Mrs Riccabocca shed tears.

But so naturally amiable was she, that she hastened to curb her emotion, and efface as well as she could the trace of a stepmother's grief. When this was done, and a silent self-rebuking prayer murmured over, the good woman descended the stairs with alacrity, and, summoning up her best smiles, emerged on the terrace.



She was repaid; for scarcely had she come into the open air, when two little arms were thrown round her, and the sweetest voice that ever came from a child's lips, sighed out in broken English, "Good mamma, love me a little."

"Love you? with my whole heart!" cried the stepmother, with all a mother's honest passion. And she clasped the child to her breast.

"God bless you, my wife" said Riccabocca, in a husky tone.

"Please take this too," added Jackeymo in Italian, as well as his sobs would let him – and he broke off a great bough full of blossoms from his favourite orange-tree, and thrust it into his mistress's hand. She had not the slightest notion what he meant by it!

### CHAPTER III

Violante was indeed a bewitching child – a child to whom I defy Mrs Caudle herself (immortal Mrs Caudle!) to have been a harsh stepmother.

Look at her now, as, released from those kindly arms, she stands, still clinging with one hand to her new mamma, and holding out the other to Riccabocca – with those large dark eyes swimming in happy tears. What a lovely smile! – what an ingenuous candid brow! She looks delicate – she evidently requires care – she wants the mother. And rare is the woman who would not love her the better for that! Still, what an innocent infantine bloom in those clear smooth cheeks! – and in that slight frame, what exquisite natural grace!

"And this, I suppose, is your nurse, darling?" said Mrs Riccabocca, observing a dark foreign-looking woman, dressed very strangely – without cap or bonnet, but a great silver arrow stuck in her hair, and a filagree chain or necklace resting upon her kerchief.

"Ah, good Annetta," said Violante in Italian. "Papa, she says she is to go back; but she is not to go back – is she?"

Riccabocca, who had scarcely before noticed the woman, started at that question – exchanged a rapid glance with Jackeymo – and then, muttering some inaudible excuse, approached the Nurse, and, beckoning her to follow him, went away into the grounds. He did not return for more than an hour, nor did the woman then accompany him home. He said briefly to his wife that the Nurse was obliged to return at once to Italy, and that she would stay in the village to catch the mail; that indeed she would be of no use in their establishment, as she could not speak a word of English; but that he was sadly afraid Violante would pine for her. And Violante did pine at first. But still, to a child it is so great a thing to find a parent – to be at home – that, tender and grateful as Violante was, she could not be inconsolable while her father was there to comfort.

For the first few days, Riccabocca scarcely permitted any one to be with his daughter but himself. He would not even leave her alone with his Jemima. They walked out together – sat together for hours in the Belvidere. Then by degrees he began to resign her more and more to Jemima's care and tuition, especially in English, of which language at present she spoke only a few sentences, (previously, perhaps, learned by heart,) so as to be clearly intelligible.

## CHAPTER IV

There was one person in the establishment of Dr Riccabocca, who was satisfied neither with the marriage of his master nor the arrival of Violante – and that was our friend Lenny Fairfield. Previous to the all-absorbing duties of courtship, the young peasant had secured a very large share of Riccabocca's attention. The sage had felt interest in the growth of this rude intelligence struggling up to light. But what with the wooing, and what with the wedding, Lenny Fairfield had sunk very much out of his artificial position as pupil, into his natural station of under-gardener. And on the arrival of Violante, he saw, with natural bitterness, that he was clean forgotten, not only by Riccabocca, but almost by Jackeymo. It was true that the master still lent him books, and the servant still gave him lectures on horticulture. But Riccabocca had no time nor inclination now to amuse himself with enlightening that tumult of conjecture which the books created. And if Jackeymo had been covetous of those mines of gold buried beneath the acres now fairly taken from the Squire, (and good-naturedly added rent-free, as an aid to Jemima's dower,) before the advent of the young lady whose future dowry the produce was to swell – now that she was actually under the eyes of the faithful servant, such a stimulus was given to his industry, that he could think of nothing else but the land, and the revolution he designed to effect in its natural English crops. The garden, save only the orange-trees, was abandoned entirely to Lenny, and additional labourers were called in for the field-work. Jackeymo had discovered that one part of the soil was suited to lavender, that another would grow camomile. He had in his heart apportioned a beautiful field of rich loam to flax; but against the growth of flax the Squire set his face obstinately. That most lucrative, perhaps, of all crops, when soil and skill suit, had, it would appear, been formerly attempted in England much more commonly than it is now; since you will find few old leases which do not contain a clause prohibitory of flax, as an impoverishment of the land. And though Jackeymo learnedly endeavoured to prove to the Squire that the flax itself contained particles which, if returned to the soil, repaid all that the crop took away, Mr Hazeldean had his old-fashioned prejudices on the matter, which were insuperable. "My forefathers," quoth he, "did not put that clause in their leases without good cause; and as the Casino lands are entailed on Frank, I have no right to gratify your foreign whims at his expense."

To make up for the loss of the flax, Jackeymo resolved to convert a very nice bit of pasture into orchard ground, which he calculated would bring in £10 net per acre by the time Miss Violante was marriageable. At this, Squire pished a little; but as it was quite clear that the land would be all the more valuable hereafter for the fruit trees, he consented to permit the 'grass land' to be thus partially broken up.

All these changes left poor Lenny Fairfield very much to himself – at a time when the new and strange devices which the initiation into book knowledge creates, made it most desirable that he should have the constant guidance of a superior mind.

One evening after his work, as Lenny was returning to his mother's cottage very sullen and very moody, he suddenly came in contact with Sprott the tinker.

## CHAPTER V

The tinker was seated under a hedge, hammering away at an old kettle – with a little fire burning in front of him – and the donkey hard by, indulging in a placid doze. Mr Sprott looked up as Lenny passed – nodded kindly, and said —

"Good evenin', Lenny: to hear you be so 'spectably sitivated with Mounseer."

"Ay," answered Lenny, with a leaven of rancour in his recollections, "You're not ashamed to speak to me now, that I am not in disgrace. But it was in disgrace, when it wasn't my fault, that the real gentleman was most kind to me."

"Ar – r, Lenny," said the Tinker, with a prolonged rattle in that said Ar – r, which was not without great significance. "But you sees the real gentleman who han't got his bread to get, can hafford to 'spise his cracter in the world. A poor tinker must be timbersome and nice in his 'sociations. But sit down here a bit, Lenny; I've summat to say to ye!"

"To me – "

"To ye. Give the neddy a shove out i' the vay, and sit down, I say."

Lenny rather reluctantly, and somewhat superciliously, accepted this invitation.

"I hears," said the Tinker in a voice made rather indistinct by a couple of nails which he had inserted between his teeth; "I hears as how you be unkimmon fond of reading. I ha' sum nice cheap books in my bag yonder – sum as low as a penny."

"I should like to see them," said Lenny, his eyes sparkling.

The Tinker rose, opened one of the paniers on the ass's back, took out a bag which he placed before Lenny, and told him to suit himself. The young peasant desired no better. He spread all the contents of the bag on the sward, and a motley collection of food for the mind was there – food and poison —*serpentes avibus*– good and evil. Here, Milton's Paradise Lost, there The Age of Reason – here Methodist Tracts, there True Principles of Socialism – Treatises on Useful Knowledge by sound learning actuated by pure benevolence – Appeals to Operatives by the shallowest reasoners, instigated by the same ambition that had moved Eratosthenes to the conflagration of a temple; works of fiction admirable as Robinson Crusoe, or innocent as the Old English Baron, beside coarse translations of such garbage as had rotted away the youth of France under Louis Quinze. This miscellany was an epitome, in short, of the mixed World of Books, of that vast City of the Press, with its palaces and hovels, its aqueducts and sewers – which opens all alike to the naked eye and the curious mind of him to whom you say, in the Tinker's careless phrase, "suit yourself."

But it is not the first impulse of a nature, healthful and still pure, to settle in the hovel and lose itself amidst the sewers; and Lenny Fairfield turned innocently over the bad books, and selecting two or three of the best, brought them to the Tinker and asked the price.

"Why," said Mr Sprott, putting on his spectacles, "you has taken the werry dearest: them 'ere be much cheaper, and more hinterestin'."

"But I don't fancy them," answered Lenny; "I don't understand what they are about, and this seems to tell one how the steam-engine is made, and has nice plates; and this is Robinson Crusoe, which Parson Dale once said he would give me – I'd rather buy it out of my own money."

"Well, please yourself," quoth the Tinker; "you shall have the books for four bob, and you can pay me next month."

"Four bobs – four shillings? it is a great sum," said Lenny, "but I will lay by, as you are kind enough to trust me; good evening, Mr Sprott."

"Stay a bit," said the Tinker; "I'll just throw you these two little tracks into the barging; they be only a shilling a dozen, so 'tis but tuppence – and ven you has read *those*, vy, you'll be a reglar customer."

The tinker tossed to Lenny Nos. 1 and 2 of Appeals to Operatives, and the peasant took them up gratefully.

The young knowledge-seeker went his way across, the green fields, and under the still autumn foliage of the hedgerows. He looked first at one book, then at another; he did not know on which to settle.

The Tinker rose and made a fire with leaves and furze and sticks, some dry and some green.

Lenny has now opened No. 1 of the tracts: they are the shortest to read, and don't require so much effort of the mind as the explanation of the steam-engine.

The Tinker has now set on his grimy glue-pot, and the glue simmers.

## CHAPTER VI

As Violante became more familiar with her new home, and those around her became more familiar with Violante, she was remarked for a certain stateliness of manner and bearing, which, had it been less evidently natural and inborn, would have seemed misplaced in the daughter of a forlorn exile, and would have been rare at so early an age among children of the loftiest pretensions. It was with the air of a little princess that she presented her tiny hand to a friendly pressure, or submitted her calm clear cheek to a presuming kiss. Yet withal she was so graceful, and her very stateliness was so pretty and captivating, that she was not the less loved for all her grand airs. And, indeed, she deserved to be loved; for though she was certainly prouder than Mr Dale could approve of, her pride was devoid of egotism; and that is a pride by no means common. She had an intuitive forethought for others; you could see that she was capable of that grand woman-heroism, abnegation of self; and though she was an original child, and often grave and musing, with a tinge of melancholy, sweet, but deep in her character, still she was not above the happy genial merriment of childhood, – only her silver laugh was more attuned, and her gestures more composed, than those of children habituated to many play-fellows usually are. Mrs Hazeldean liked her best when she was grave, and said "she would become a very sensible woman." Mrs Dale liked her best when she was gay, and said "she was born to make many a heart ache;" for which Mrs Dale was properly reproved by the Parson. Mrs Hazeldean gave her a little set of garden tools; Mrs Dale a picture-book and a beautiful doll. For a long time the book and the doll had the preference. But Mrs Hazeldean having observed to Riccabocca that the poor child looked pale, and ought to be a good deal in the open air, the wise father ingeniously pretended to Violante that Mrs Riccabocca had taken a great fancy to the picture-book, and that he should be very glad to have the doll, upon which Violante hastened to give them both away, and was never so happy as when mamma (as she called Mrs Riccabocca) was admiring the picture-book, and Riccabocca, with austere gravity dandled the doll. Then Riccabocca assured her that she could be of great use to him in the garden; and Violante instantly put into movement her spade, hoe, and wheel-barrow.

This last occupation brought her into immediate contact with Mr Leonard Fairfield; and that personage one morning, to his great horror, found Miss Violante had nearly exterminated a whole celery-bed, which she had ignorantly conceived to be a crop of weeds.

Lenny was extremely angry. He snatched away the hoe, and said angrily, "You must not do that, Miss. I'll tell your papa if you –"

Violante drew herself up, and never having been so spoken to before, at least since her arrival in England, there was something comic in the surprise of her large eyes, as well as something tragic in the dignity of her offended mien. "It is very naughty of you, Miss," continued Leonard in a milder tone, for he was both softened by the eyes and awed by the mien, "and I trust you will not do it again."

"*Non capisco*," (I don't understand,) murmured Violante, and the dark eyes filled with tears. At that moment up came Jackeymo; and Violante, pointing to Leonard, said, with an effort not to betray her emotion, "*Il fanciullo e molto grossolano*," (he is a very rude boy.)

Jackeymo turned to Leonard with the look of an enraged tiger. "How you dare, scum of de earth that you are," cried he,<sup>19</sup> "how you dare make cry the signorina?" And his English not supplying familiar vituperatives sufficiently, he poured out upon Lenny such a profusion of Italian abuse, that the boy turned red and white in a breath with rage and perplexity.

Violante took instant compassion upon the victim she had made, and, with true feminine caprice, now began to scold Jackeymo for his anger, and, finally approaching Leonard, laid her hand

---

<sup>19</sup> It need scarcely be observed, that Jackeymo, in his conversations with his master or Violante, or his conferences with himself, employs his native language, which is therefore translated without the blunders that he is driven to commit when compelled to trust himself to the tongue of the country in which he is a sojourner.

on his arm, and said with a kindness at once childlike and queenly, and in the prettiest imaginable mixture of imperfect English and soft Italian, to which I cannot pretend to do justice, and shall therefore translate: "Don't mind him. I dare say it was all my fault, only I did not understand you: are not these things weeds?"

"No, my darling signorina," said Jackeymo in Italian, looking ruefully at the celery-bed, "they are not weeds, and they sell very well at this time of the year. But still, if it amuses you to pluck them up, I should like to see who's to prevent it."

Lenny walked away. He had been called "the scum of the earth," by a foreigner too! He had again been ill-treated for doing what he conceived his duty. He was again feeling the distinction between rich and poor, and he now fancied that that distinction involved deadly warfare, for he had read from beginning to end those two damnable tracts which the Tinker had presented to him. But in the midst of all the angry disturbance of his mind, he felt the soft touch of the infant's hand, the soothing influence of her conciliating words, and he was half ashamed that he had spoken so roughly to a child.

Still, not trusting himself to speak, he walked away and sat down at a distance. "I don't see," thought he, "why there should be rich and poor, master and servant." Lenny, be it remembered, had not heard the Parson's Political Sermon.

An hour after, having composed himself, Lenny returned to his work. Jackeymo was no longer in the garden; he had gone to the fields; but Riccabocca was standing by the celery-bed, and holding the red silk umbrella over Violante as she sat on the ground looking up at her father with those eyes already so full of intelligence, and love, and soul.

"Lenny," said Riccabocca, "my young lady has been telling me that she has been very naughty, and Giacomo very unjust to you. Forgive them both."

Lenny's sullenness melted in an instant: the reminiscence of tracts Nos. 1 and 2, —

"Like the baseless fabric of a vision,  
Left not a wreck behind."

He raised eyes, swimming with all his native goodness, towards the wise man, and dropped them gratefully on the face of the infant peace-maker. Then he turned away his head and fairly wept. The Parson was right: "O ye poor, have charity for the rich; O ye rich, respect the poor."

## CHAPTER VII

Now from that day the humble Lenny and the regal Violante became great friends. With what pride he taught her to distinguish between celery and weeds – and how proud too was she when she learned that she was *useful*! There is not a greater pleasure you can give to children, especially female children, than to make them feel they are already of value in the world, and serviceable as well as protected. Weeks and months rolled away, and Lenny still read, not only the books lent him by the Doctor, but those he bought of Mr Sprott. As for the bombs and shells against religion which the Tinker carried in his bag, Lenny was not induced to blow himself up with them. He had been reared from his cradle in simple love and reverence for the Divine Father, and the tender Saviour, whose life beyond all records of human goodness, whose death beyond all epics of mortal heroism, no being whose infancy has been taught to supplicate the Merciful and adore the Holy, yea, even though his later life may be entangled amidst the thorns of some desolate pyrrhonism, can ever hear reviled and scoffed without a shock to the conscience and a revolt of the heart. As the deer recoils by instinct from the tiger, as the very look of the scorpion deters you from handling it, though you never saw a scorpion before, so the very first line in some ribald profanity on which the Tinker put his black finger, made Lenny's blood run cold. Safe, too, was the peasant boy from any temptation in works of a gross and licentious nature, not only because of the happy ignorance of his rural life, but because of a more enduring safe-guard – genius! Genius, that, manly, robust, healthful as it be, is long before it lose its instinctive Dorian modesty; shame-faced, because so susceptible to glory – genius, that loves indeed to dream, but on the violet bank, not the dung-hill. Wherefore, even in the error of the senses, it seeks to escape from the sensual into worlds of fancy, subtle and refined. But apart from the passions, true genius is the most practical of all human gifts. Like the Apollo, whom the Greek worshipped as its type, even Arcady is its exile, not its home. Soon weary of the dalliance of Tempé, it ascends to its mission – the Archer of the silver bow, the guide of the car of light. Speaking more plainly, genius is the enthusiasm for self-improvement; it ceases or sleeps the moment it desists from seeking some object which it believes of value, and by that object it insensibly connects its self-improvement with the positive advance of the world. At present Lenny's genius had no bias that was not to the Positive and Useful. It took the direction natural to his sphere, and the wants therein – viz., to the arts which we call mechanical. He wanted to know about steam-engines and Artesian wells; and to know about them it was necessary to know something of mechanics and hydrostatics; so he bought popular elementary works on those mystic sciences, and set all the powers of his mind at work on experiments.

Noble and generous spirits are ye, who, with small care for fame, and little reward from pelf, have opened to the intellects of the poor the portals of wisdom! I honour and revere ye; only do not think ye have done all that is needful. Consider, I pray ye, whether so good a choice from the Tinker's bag would have been made by a boy whom religion had not scared from the Pestilent, and genius had not led to the Self-improving. And Lenny did not wholly escape from the mephitic portions of the motley elements from which his awakening mind drew its nurture. Think not it was all pure oxygen that the panting lip drew in. No; there, were still those inflammatory tracts. Political I do not like to call them, for politics mean the art of government, and the tracts I speak of assailed all government which mankind has hitherto recognised. Sad rubbish, perhaps, were such tracts to you, O sound thinker, in your easy-chair! Or to you, practised statesman, at your post on the Treasury Bench – to you, calm dignitary of a learned Church – or to you, my lord judge, who may often have sent from your bar to the dire Orcus of Norfolk's Isle the ghosts of men whom that rubbish, falling simultaneously on the bumps of acquisitiveness and combativeness, hath untimely slain. Sad rubbish to you! But seems it such rubbish to the poor man, to whom it promises a paradise on the easy terms of upsetting a world? For ye see, these "Appeals to Operatives" represent that same world-upsetting as the simplest



thing imaginable – a sort of two-and-two-make-four proposition. The poor have only got to set their strong hands to the axle, and heave-a-hoy! and hurrah for the topsey-turvey! Then, just to put a little wholesome rage into the heave-a-hoy! it is so facile to accompany the eloquence of "Appeals" with a kind of stir-the-bile-up statistics – "Abuses of the Aristocracy" – "Jobs of the Priesthood" – "Expenses of Army kept up for Peers' younger sons" – "Wars contracted for the villanous purpose of raising the rents of the landowners" – all arithmetically dished up, and seasoned with tales of every gentleman who has committed a misdeed, every clergyman who has dishonoured his cloth; as if such instances were fair specimens of average gentlemen and ministers of religion! All this, passionately advanced, (and observe, never answered, for that literature admits no controversialists, and the writer has it all his own way,) maybe rubbish; but it is out of such rubbish that operatives build barricades for attack, and legislators prisons for defence.

Our poor friend Lenny drew plenty of this stuff from the Tinker's bag. He thought it very clever and very eloquent; and he supposed the statistics were as true as mathematical demonstrations.

A famous knowledge-diffuser is looking over my shoulder, and tells me, "Increase education, and cheapen good books, and all this rubbish will disappear!" Sir, I don't believe a word of it. If you printed Ricardo and Adam Smith at a farthing a volume, I still believe that they would be as little read by the operatives as they are now-a-days by a very large proportion of highly cultivated men. I still believe that, while, the press works, attacks on the rich, and propositions for heave-a-hoys, will always form a popular portion of the Literature of Labour. There's Lenny Fairfield reading a treatise on hydraulics, and constructing a model for a fountain into the bargain; but that does not prevent his acquiescence in any proposition for getting rid of a National Debt, which he certainly never agreed to pay, and which he is told makes sugar and tea so shamefully dear. No. I tell you what does a little counteract those eloquent incentives to break his own head against the strong walls of the Social System – it is, that he has two eyes in that head, which are not always employed in reading. And, having been told in print that masters are tyrants, parsons hypocrites or drones in the hive, and landowners vampires and bloodsuckers, he looks out into the little world around him, and, first, he is compelled to acknowledge that his master is not a tyrant, (perhaps because he is a foreigner and a philosopher, and, for what I and Lenny know, a republican.) But then Parson Dale, though High Church to the marrow, is neither hypocrite nor drone. He has a very good living, it is true – much better than he ought to have, according to the "political" opinions of those tracts; but Lenny is obliged to confess that, if Parson Dale were a penny the poorer, he would do a pennyworth's less good; and, comparing one parish with another, such as Roodhall and Hazeldean, he is dimly aware that there is no greater CIVILISER than a parson tolerably well off. Then, too, Squire Hazeldean, though as arrant a Tory as ever stood upon shoe-leather, is certainly not a vampire nor bloodsucker. He does not feed on the public; a great many of the public feed upon him: and, therefore, his practical experience a little staggers and perplexes Lenny Fairfield as to the gospel accuracy of his theoretical dogmas. Masters, parsons, and landowners! having, at the risk of all popularity, just given a *coup de patte*

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.