

# VARIOUS

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### MRS CHISHOLM

This lady will be ranked with the memorable persons of the age; her enthusiastic and ceaseless endeavours to do good, the discretion and intelligence with which she pursues her aims, and her remarkable self-sacrifices in the cause of humanity, placing her in the category of the Mrs Frys and other heroic Englishwomen. The history of Mrs Chisholm's labours up to the present time is worthy of being fully told.

Caroline Jones, as this lady was originally called, is the daughter of William Jones, a respectable yeoman of Northamptonshire; and when about twenty years of age, she was married to Captain A. Chisholm of the Madras army. Two years after this event, she removed with her husband to India, where she entered upon those movements of a public nature that have so eminently distinguished her. Shocked with the depravities to which the children of soldiers are exposed in the barrack-rooms, she rested not till she had established a School of Industry for girls, which became eminently successful, and, under an extended form, has continued to be of great social importance to Madras. The pupils were taught to sew, cook, and otherwise manage household affairs; and we are told, that on finishing their education, they were eagerly sought for as servants, or wives, by non-commissioned officers. In this career of usefulness, Mrs Chisholm employed herself until 1838, when, for the benefit of her husband's health, and that of her infant family, she left India for Australia, the climate of which seemed likely to prove beneficial. At the end of the year, she arrived in Sydney, where, besides attending to family matters, there was plenty of scope for philanthropic exertion. Drawing our information from a small work purporting to present a memoir of Mrs Chisholm,<sup>1</sup> it appears that 'the first objects that came under her notice, and were benefited by her benevolence, were a party of Highland emigrants, who had been sent to the shores of a country where the language spoken was to them strange and unknown, and without a friend to assist or guide them in that path of honourable labour which they desired. As a temporary means of relief, Mrs Chisholm lent them money to purchase tools and wheelbarrows, whereby they might cut and sell firewood to the inhabitants. The success of this experiment was gratifying both to the bestower and receiver; in the one it revived drooping hopes, the other it incited to larger enterprises of humanity.'

In 1840, Captain Chisholm returned to his duties in India, leaving his wife and family to remain some time longer in Sydney; and from this period may be dated her extraordinary efforts for meliorating the condition of poor female emigrants. What fell under her notice in connection with these luckless individuals was truly appalling. Huddled into a barrack on arrival; no trouble taken to put girls in the way of earning an honest livelihood; moral pollution all around; the government authorities and everybody else too busy to mind whether emigration was rightly or wrongly conducted—there was evidently much to be done. In January 1841, Mrs Chisholm wrote to Lady Gipps, the wife of the governor, on the subject; tried to interest others; and although with some doubts as to the result, all expressed themselves interested. Much jealousy and prejudice, however, required to be overcome. Bigotry was even brought into play. There might be some deep sectarian scheme in the pretended efforts to serve these young and unprotected females. We need hardly speak in the language of detestation of this species of obstructiveness, which prevents hundreds of valuable schemes of social

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<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of Mrs Caroline Chisholm. London: Webb, Millington, & Co. 1852.

melioration from being entered into. Fortunately, Mrs Chisholm treated with scorn or indifference the various means adopted to retard her benevolent operations. She persevered until she had organised the Female Emigrants' Home. She says: 'I appealed to the public for support: after a time, this appeal was liberally met. There were neither sufficient arrangements made for removing emigrants into the interior, nor for protecting females on their arrival. A few only were properly protected, while hundreds were wandering about Sydney without friends or protection—great numbers of these young creatures were thrown out of employment by new arrivals. I received into the Home several, who, I found, had slept out many nights in the government domain, seeking the sheltered recesses of the rocks rather than encounter the dangers of the streets. It was estimated that there were 600 females, at the time I commenced, unprovided for in Sydney. I made an offer to the government of gratuitously devoting my time to the superintendence of a Home of Protection for them in the town, and also to exert myself to procure situations for them in the country.'

While making arrangements for conducting the establishment for female emigrants, Mrs Chisholm acquired a consciousness that male emigrants of a humble class likewise required some degree of attention. Great numbers, for want of proper information, did not know what to do with themselves on arrival. 'At the time labourers were required in the interior, there were numbers idle in Sydney, supported at the expense of the government. Things wore a serious aspect; mischief-making parties, for some paltry gain, fed the spirit of discontent. The Irish lay in the streets, looking vacantly, and basking in the sun. Apart from them, Englishmen, sullen in feature, sat on gates and palings, letting their legs swing in the air. Another group was composed of Scotchmen, their hands thrust into their empty pockets, suspiciously glancing at everything and everybody from beneath their bushy eyebrows. Mrs Chisholm ventured to produce a change; she provided for the leaders first, shewed how she desired to be the friend of the industrious man, and went with numbers in search of employment, far into the country. She undertook journeys of 300 miles into the interior with families; and the further she went, the more satisfactory was the settlement of the parties accompanying this brave lady. "When the public had an opportunity of judging of the effect of my system," writes Mrs Chisholm, "they came forward, and enabled me to go on. The government contributed, in various ways, to the amount of about L.150. I met with great assistance from the country committees. The squatters and settlers were always willing to give me conveyance for the people. The country people always supplied provisions. Mr William Bradley, a native of the colony, authorised me to draw upon him for money, provisions, horses, or anything I might require; but the people met my efforts so readily, that I had no necessity to draw upon him for a sixpence. At public inns, the females were sheltered, and I was provisioned myself without charge: my personal expenses, during my seven years' service, amounted to only L.1, 18s. 6d. As numbers of the masters were afraid, if they advanced the money for the conveyance by the steamers, the parties would never reach the stations, I met the difficulty by advancing the fare, confiding in the good feeling of the man that he would keep to his agreement, and to the principle of the master that he would repay me. Although in hundreds of cases the masters were then strangers to me, I only lost L.16 by casualties. At times, I have paid as much as L.40 for steamers, and, from first to last, in following out my system, I have been the means of settling 11,000 souls. The largest number that ever left Sydney under my charge, at one time, was 147; but from accessions on the road, they increased considerably. The longest journey of this kind occupied five weeks, three weeks of which were passed on the road.'"

One cannot but admire the enthusiasm with which all this was gone through. The whole thing was a labour of love, and carried through, as will be observed, not without vast personal toil, and some degree of pecuniary outlay. Mrs Chisholm says she lost only L.16; but how few people in her rank, and with as comparatively moderate means, would give L.16 to promote any benevolent project whatsoever! The bulk of mankind content themselves with contributing criticism. They applaud or censure according as the thing looks in the eye of the world: when money is spoken of, they keep discreetly aloof.

In her enterprise to put female emigrants on the road to fortune, Mrs Chisholm met with some curious cases of presumption. Many applications were made by young women who professed to be governesses, but were utterly incompetent for the situation. Among others came one who offered herself as a nursery governess, who, on inquiry, could neither read nor write nor spell correctly. Another wished for the situation of housekeeper, and with her the following dialogue took place:—"Can you wash your own clothes?" "Never did such a thing in my life." "Can you make a dress?" "No." "Cook?" "No." "What *can* you do?" "Why, ma'am, I could look after the servants; I could direct them: I should make an excellent housekeeper." "You are certain?" "Yes, or I would not say so." "Do you know the quantity of the different ingredients wanted for a beefsteak-pie of the size of that dish, and a rice-pudding of the same size?" "O no, ma'am—that's not what I meant: *I'd see that the servants did it!*" "But there might be great waste, and you not know it; besides, all, or nearly all, the servants sent to this colony require teaching."

'Nothing, observes Mrs Chisholm, but my faith in Providence, that there must be a place fitting for every body in society, enabled me to bear such inflictions: this faith made me labour in seeking some suitable employment for each, and had I not possessed it, but turned them out, their fate would have been inevitable and horrible.'

The business of attending to the 'Home,' and finding places for everybody, was not without some pleasant excitement. Mrs Chisholm was sometimes asked to find wives as well as servants; and as a specimen of applications on this delicate head, she gives the following amusing epistle, which is printed as she received it:—

"Reverend Madam—I heard you are the best to send to for a servant, and I heard our police magistrate say, it was best to leave all to you; and so I'll just do the same, as his honour says it's the best. I had a wife once, and so she was too good for me by the far, and it was God's will, ma'am; but I has a child, ma'am, that I wouldn't see a straw touch for the world; the boy's only four yeare old: and I has a snug fifty-acre farm and a town 'lotment, and I has no debts in the world, and one teem and four bullocks; and I'se ten head oh cattle, and a share on eight hundred sheep, so I as a rite to a desent servant, that can wash and cook and make the place decant; and I don't mind what religion she bey, if she is sober and good, only I'se a Protestant myself; and the boy I have, I promised the mother on her death-bed should be a Catholic, and I won't, anyhow, have any interference in this here matter. That I do like in writing nothing else, I wouldn't, mam, on any account in the world, be bound to marry; but I don't wish it altogether to be left out. I'll ge her fourteen wages, and if she don't like me, and I don't like her, I'll pay her back to Sydney. I want nothing in the world but what is honest, so make the agreement as you like, and I'll bide by it. I sends you all the papers, and you'l now I'm a man wot's to be trusted. I sends you five pounds; she may get wages first, for I know some of the gals, and the best on um, to, are not heavy we boxes; and supposing anything should happen, I would not like it to be said she come here in rags. I wants, also, a man and his wife; he must be willing to learn to plough, if he don't now how, and do a good fair day's work at anything; his wife must be a milker, and ha dustrious woman; I'll give them as much as they can eat and drink of tea and milk, and, whatever wages you set my name down for, I'll be bound to pay it. With all the honer in the world, I'se bound to remain your servant till death." There was something, remarks Mrs Chisholm, in the character of this honest bushman, during his colonial residence, to admire; he had gained his freedom, sent home money to his parents, and, during a long and tedious illness of twenty months, had attended his sick wife with patient care. Who would not get up an hour earlier to serve such a man?—I did, for I knew that early in the morning is the *best* time to choose a wife. I went first into the governess-room—all asleep; I unlocked the Home-door—some dressed, others half-dressed, some too very cross: I have often remarked, that early in the day is the best time to judge of a woman's temper; but I wish this to be kept a secret. I remained half an hour in the Home; I then went through the tents, could not suit myself, and returned. At the Home-door, I found a girl at the wash-tub; she was at work with spirit; she was rather good-looking, very neat and tidy. I went into my office, and ascertained that, on board

ship, her character was good. I desired the matron never to lose sight of her conduct, and report the same to me. Day after day passed, and I was at last fully determined to place her within reach of my applicant in the bush—that is, in a respectable family in his near neighbourhood; but I was able to arrange better, for I found that, amongst the families wanting situations, there was one related to her. I immediately engaged them as the bushman's servants; they were a respectable couple; the man a very prudent person. I told them to take the girl with them, and get her service near them, and on no account to allow her to live with a bachelor. I gave the girl three letters to respectable ladies, and she was engaged by one the fourth day after her arrival at —. About a fortnight after, the bushman wrote to thank me for sending him the married couple; and concluded by saying: "With regard to that *other* matter, upon my word you have suited me exactly; and as soon as our month is up, we is to be married." I received, says Mrs Chisholm, forty-one applications of this kind; but the above is the only girl I ever sent into the country with a *direct* matrimonial intention.'

That 'Providence has a place for everybody' is an axiom that cannot be too strongly insisted on. The difficulty, however, is to know where that place is. It will help considerably to relieve us of trouble on this score, if we bear in mind that we are not limited in our choice of country. If every place is filled in this old and settled territory, by all means go away to new regions which lie invitingly open for trial. In short, go to America, or go to Australia, and in either of these find your proper place. There can be no doubt of your discovering it, provided you but look for it. Great in this faith has Caroline Chisholm laboured. First, she helped women into situations in Australia; then she similarly helped men; next, she fell on the expedient of bringing wives and families to join husbands who longed for their society; and lastly, she organised plans for sending out young women to the colony, with a view to balance the inequality of the sexes. To execute her designs in a proper manner, she required to know the real wants and condition of settlers; and, will it be credited, that she set out on long and painful journeys in a covered spring-van, and did not desist till she had gathered six hundred biographies!

In 1845, Mrs Chisholm was joined by her husband from India, and she prepared to return to England. Five years of earnest and successful endeavour had wonderfully altered the general opinion respecting her operations. There was no longer any fault-finding. Jealousies had been overcome. It was now the fashion to speak well of plans that were once viewed with apathy or suspicion. 'In February 1846, a public meeting was held at Sydney, for the purpose of taking into consideration the presenting to Mrs Chisholm, then on the eve of her departure for England, a testimonial of the estimation in which her labours on behalf of the emigrant population were viewed by the colonists. Some idea may be formed of the respect felt for the admirable lady, and acknowledgment of her public services, when eight members of the Legislative Council, the mayor of Sydney, the high-sheriff, thirteen magistrates, and many leading merchants, formed themselves into a committee to carry the wishes of the meeting into effect. The amount of each subscription was limited.' In a short time 150 guineas were raised, and presented with a laudatory address. 'Mrs Chisholm accepted the testimonial, in order to expend it in further promoting emigration, in restoring wives to husbands, and children to parents. In the course of her answer, she said: "It is my intention, if supported by your co-operation, to attempt more than I have hitherto performed." She left Australia in 1846, bearing with her the warm prayers of the working colonists, whose confidence and gratitude, both bond and free, she had thoroughly secured, charged with the self-imposed mission of representing in England the claims of those powerless classes who have neither honour nor pensions to bestow on their advocates.'

Since 1846, Mrs Chisholm has resided near London, and devoted herself to the promotion of her last great scheme. This is to send emigrants to Australia, in what are called Family Groups, under the auspices of the Family Colonisation Loan Society. The main features of the plan are these: suitable and well-recommended persons are enrolled as members on paying a small fee; and they are sent out on paying two-thirds of the passage-money—the remaining third being paid as a loan by the society, which loan is to be repaid from wages received in the colony. No security is required for the loan. The society reckon on the integrity and gratitude of the emigrants, and on the principle of associating

parties into groups, the members of which exercise a mutual supervision. A group consists of twelve adults. Friendless young women are introduced to and grouped with families. These introductions usually take place at Mrs Chisholm's residence once every week, when the groups are addressed in a friendly manner, and furnished with hints for their government on board ship.

Another important feature in these operations, is to help poor emigrants to remit small sums to friends at home, the difficulty of making such remittances having formerly been very considerable. To organise a proper system of remitting, Captain Chisholm has returned to Australia, and, according to an account given by Mrs Chisholm in a letter to the *Times*, it appears that the system is realising all reasonable expectation. We copy the substance of this letter as a fitting conclusion to our sketch.

'This is the first organised attempt of enabling the English emigrants in Australia to imitate the generous devotion of the Irish settled in the United States. While contemplating with admiration the laborious devotion proved by the remittance of millions sterling from the American Irish to remove their relations from a land of low wages and famine, I have always had a firm belief that the English emigrants in Australia only required the opportunity to imitate the noble example, and the "remittance-roll" is evidence of the correctness of my opinion.

'Until very recently, there have been no channels through which the Australian settler could safely and cheaply remit small sums to England.

'When I was resident in Sydney, many emigrants were anxious to send small sums to their friends "at home," and came to me with money for that purpose; but I found that the banks charged as much for L.15 as for L.50, and that they altogether declined to take the trouble of remitting small amounts. On making a representation of this fact to his excellency Sir George Gipps, he communicated with the banks through the Colonial Secretary, and they consented to receive small remittances from labouring people, if I personally accompanied the depositor; but, with my other engagements, it was impossible for me to spare many hours in the week to introducing shepherds and stockmen, with their L.5 or L.10, to the cashiers of the banks. Many a man, within my knowledge, has gone away on finding that he could not remit his intended present to his relations, and spent the amount in a drunken "spree." I therefore determined, that on my return to England, I would endeavour to organise some plan which should render labourers remitting their little tributes of affection to their friends nearly as easy as posting a letter.

'As soon as the Family Colonisation Society was organised, Messrs Coutts & Co. consented to appoint agents, and receive the remittances due to the society. But in order to teach and encourage the labouring colonists to take advantage of the power of remitting to England, my husband saw that it was necessary that some one devoted to the work should proceed to the colonies. The society was not rich enough to pay an agent, or even to pay the expenses of an agent who would work without salary; therefore we determined to divide our income, and separate. My husband proceeded to the colony, to collect and remit the loans of the society's emigrants, and the savings of those emigrants who wished to be joined by parents, wives, children, brothers, sisters, or other relations. I remained here to assist such relations to emigrate in an economical, safe, and decent manner, as well as to carry on the correspondence needful for discovering the relatives of long-separated emigrants—often a difficult task. We determined to work thus until the labourers' remittances should swell to such an amount as would render it worth the attention of bankers as a matter of business, if the society were not inclined to continue the trouble and responsibility.

'I am happy to say, my faith in the generous and honest disposition of British emigrants, English, Scotch, and Irish, has not been shaken, and that I may look forward with confidence to a very early date when the remittance connection of the Australian emigrants will be eagerly competed for by the most respectable firms.

'My husband writes me, that the people are filled with joy at finding that they can safely send their earnings, and secure the passage of their friends. In seven weeks he received L.3000 in gold-dust or cash, and confidently expects to remit L.15,000 within twelve months, and could collect double

that sum if he were able to visit the diggings. These remittances are not only from the emigrants sent out by the society, but from various persons of the humbler class who desire to be joined by their relations, and wish them to come out under my ship arrangements.

'It is my intention to return to Australia in the early part of next year, and there endeavour to still further promote the reunion of families. I have addressed this letter to your widely-spread and influential columns, in order to call the attention of the commercial world to the profits which may be obtained by ministering to a demand which is arising among a humble class—in order to call the attention of statesmen and philanthropists to a new element of peace, order, and civilisation, more powerful than soldiers—to a golden chain of domestic feeling, which is bridging the seas between England and Australia. Many parents, wives, children, and brothers and sisters, have received remittances for passages.'

More need hardly be said. As is generally known, ships are sailing almost weekly with emigrants of the class for whom Mrs Chisholm has so warmly interested herself; and we are glad to know from good authority, that already large sums of the lent money have been repaid, proving that the trust put in the honesty of the emigrants has not been misplaced. A great scheme, auxiliary to ordinary emigration, is therefore at work, and its usefulness is acknowledged, not only by the press and the public at large, but by parties ordinarily less alive to projects of social melioration—ministers of the crown. Every one may well concur in paying honour to Caroline Chisholm!

## A GHOST OF A HEAD

Peter Leroux was a poor ploughman in the environs of Beaugeney. After passing the day in leading across the fields the three horses which were generally yoked to his plough, he returned to the farm in the evening, supped without many words, with his fellow-labourers, lighted his lantern, and then retired to bed in a species of shed communicating with the stables. His dreams were simple, and little coloured with the tints of imagination; his horses were for the most part their principal subject. On one occasion, he started from his slumbers in the midst of his fancied efforts to lift up the obstinate mare, which had taken it into her head to be weak in the legs; another time, the 'old gray' had entangled his hoof in the cords of the team. One night, he dreamed that he had just put an entirely new thong to his old whip, but that, notwithstanding, it obstinately refused to crack. This remarkable vision impressed him so deeply, that, on awaking, he seized the whip, which he was accustomed to place every night by his side; and in order thoroughly to assure himself that he was not stricken powerless, and deprived of the most gratifying prerogative of the ploughman, he took to smacking it violently in the dead of the night. At this noise, all the stable was in commotion; the horses, alarmed, neighed, and ran one against the other, almost breaking their cords; but, with some soothing words, Peter Leroux managed to appease all this tumult, and silence was immediately restored. This was one of those extraordinary events of his life which he never failed to relate every time that a cup of wine had made him eloquent, and he found a companion in the mood to listen to him.

About the same period, dreams of quite a different kind occupied the mind of a certain M. Desalleux, deputy of the public prosecutor in the criminal court of Orleans. Having made a promising *début* in that office only a few months previously, there was no longer any position in the magistracy which he believed too high for his future attainment; and the post of keeper of the seals was one of the most frequent visions of his slumbers. But it was particularly in the intoxicating triumphs of oratory that his thoughts would revel in sleep, when the whole day had been given to the study of some case in which he was to plead. The glory of the Aguesseaux, and the other celebrated names of the great days of parliamentary eloquence, scarcely sufficed for his impatient ambition; it was in the most distant periods of the past—the times of the marvellous eloquence of Demosthenes—that he delighted to contemplate the likeness of his own ideal future. The attainment of power by eloquence; such was the idea, the text, so to speak, of his whole life—the one object for which he renounced all the ordinary hopes and pleasures of youth.

One day, these two natures—that of Peter Leroux, lifted scarcely one degree above the range of the brute, and that of M. Desalleux, abstract and rectified to the highest pitch of intellectuality—found themselves face to face. A little contest was going on between them. M. Desalleux, sitting in his official place, demanded, upon evidence somewhat insufficient, the head of Peter Leroux, accused of murder; and Peter Leroux defended his head against the eloquence of M. Desalleux.

Notwithstanding the remarkable disproportion of power which Providence had placed in this duel, the accused, for lack of conclusive proofs, would in all probability have escaped from the hands of the executioner; but from that very scantiness in the evidence arose an extraordinary opportunity for eloquence, which could not fail to be singularly useful to the ambitious hopes of M. Desalleux. In justice to himself, he could not neglect to take advantage of it.

In the next place, an unlucky circumstance presented itself for poor Peter Leroux. Some days before the commencement of the trial, and in the presence of several ladies, who promised themselves the pleasure of being there to enjoy the spectacle, the young deputy had let fall an expression of his firm confidence in obtaining from the jury a verdict of condemnation. Every one will understand the painful position in which he would be placed if his prosecution failed, and Peter Leroux came back with his head upon his shoulders, to testify to the weakness of M. Desalleux's eloquence. Let us not be too severe upon the deputy of the public prosecutor: if he was not absolutely convinced, it was

his duty to appear so, and only the more meritorious to utter such eloquent denunciations as for a century past had not been heard at the bar of the criminal court of Orleans. Oh, if you had been there to see how they were moved, those poor gentlemen of the jury!—moved almost to tears, when, in a fine and most sonorous peroration, he set before them the fearful picture of society shaken to its foundations—the whole community about to enter upon dissolution, immediately upon the acquittal of Peter Leroux! If you had only heard the courteous eulogiums exchanged on both sides, when the advocate of the accused, commencing his address, declared that he could not go further without rendering homage to the brilliant powers of oratory displayed by the deputy public prosecutor! If you had only heard the president of the court, making the same felicitations the text of his exordium, so well, that nothing would have persuaded you that it was not an academical fête, and that they were not simply awarding a prize for eloquence, instead of a sentence of death to a fellow-creature. You would have seen, in the midst of a crowd of 'elegantly-attired members of the fair sex,' as the newspapers of the province said, the sister of M. Desalleux, receiving the compliments of all the ladies around her; while, at a little distance, the old father was weeping with joy at the sight of the noble son and incomparable orator whom he had given to the world.

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