and Radical), permanent surplus, superfluous population; the competition among the workers is constantly greater than the competition to secure workers.

Whence comes this incongruity? It lies in the nature of industrial competition and the commercial crises which arise from them. In the present unregulated production and distribution of the means of subsistence, which is carried on not directly for the sake of supplying needs, but for profit, in the system under which every one works for himself to enrich himself, disturbances inevitably arise at every moment. For example, England supplies a number of countries with most diverse goods. Now, although the manufacturer may know how much of each article is consumed in each country annually, he cannot know how much is on hand at every given moment, much less can he know how much his competitors export thither. He can only draw most uncertain inferences from the perpetual fluctuations in prices, as to the quantities on hand and the needs of the moment. He must trust to luck in exporting his goods. Everything is done blindly, as guess work, more or less at the mercy of accident. Upon the slightest favourable report, each one exports what he can, and before long such a market is glutted, sales stop, capital remains inactive, prices fall, and English manufacture has no further employment for its hands.

In the beginning of the development of manufacture, these checks were limited to single branches and single markets; but the centralising tendency of competition, which drives the hands thrown out of one branch into such other branches as are most readily accessible, and transfers the goods which cannot be disposed of in one market to other markets, has gradually brought the single minor crises nearer together and united them into one periodically recurring crisis. Such a crisis usually recurs once in five years after a brief period of activity and general prosperity; the home market, like all foreign ones, is glutted with English goods, which it can only slowly absorb, the industrial movement comes to a standstill in almost every branch, the small manufacturers and merchants who cannot survive a prolonged inactivity of their invested capital fail, the larger ones suspend business during the worst season, close their mills or work short time, perhaps half the day; wages fall by reason of the competition of the unemployed, the diminution of working-time and the lack of profitable sales; want becomes universal among the workers, the small savings, which individuals may have made, are rapidly consumed, the philanthropic institutions are overburdened, the poor rates are doubled, trebled, and still insufficient, the number of the starving increases, and the whole multitude of "surplus" population presses in terrific numbers into the foreground. This continues for a time; the "surplus" exist as best they may, or perish; philanthropy and the Poor Law help many of them to a painful prolongation of their existence. Others find scant means of subsistence here and there in such kinds of work as have been least open to competition, are most remote from manufacture. And with how little can a human being keep body and soul together for a time! Gradually the state of things improve; the accumulations of goods are consumed, the general depression among the men of commerce and manufacture prevents a too hasty replenishing of the markets, and at last rising prices and favourable reports from all directions restore activity. Most of the markets are distant ones; demand increases and prices rise constantly while the first exports are arriving; people struggle for the first goods, the first sales univene trade still more, the prospective ones promise still higher prices; expecting a further rise, merchants begin to buy upon speculation, and so to withdraw from consumption the articles intended for it, just when they are most needed. Speculation forces prices still higher, by inspiring others to purchase, and appropriating new importations at once. All this is reported to England, manufacturers begin to produce with a will, new mills are built, every means is employed to make the most of the favourable moment. Speculation arises here, too, exerting the same influence as upon foreign markets, raising prices, withdrawing goods from consumption, spurring manufacture in both ways to the highest pitch of effort. Thus come the daring speculators working with fictitious capital, living upon credit, ruined if they cannot speedily sell; they hurl themselves into this
universal, disorderly race for profits, multiply the disorder and haste by their unbridled passion, which drives prices and production to madness. It is a frantic struggle, which carries away even the most experienced and phlegmatic; goods are spun, woven, hammered, as if all mankind were to be newly equipped, as though two thousand million new consumers had been discovered in the moon. At once the shaky speculators abroad, who must have money, begin to sell, below market price, of course, for their need is urgent; one sale is followed by others, prices fluctuate, speculators throw their goods upon the market in terror, the market is disordered, credit shaken, one house after another stops payments, bankruptcy follows bankruptcy, and the discovery is made that three times more goods are on hand or under way than can be consumed. The news reaches England, where production has been going on at full speed meanwhile, panic seizes all hands, failures abroad cause others in England, the panic crushes a number of firms, all reserves are thrown upon the market here, too, in the moment of anxiety, and the alarm is still further exaggerated. This is the beginning of the crisis, which then takes precisely the same course as its predecessor, and gives place in turn to a season of prosperity. So it goes on perpetually,—prosperity, crisis, prosperity, crisis, and this perennial round in which English industry moves is, as has been before observed, usually completed once in five or six years.

From this it is clear that English manufacture must have, at all times save the brief periods of highest prosperity, an unemployed reserve army of workers, in order to be able to produce the masses of goods required by the market in the liveliest months. This reserve army is larger or smaller, according as the state of the market occasions the employment of a larger or smaller proportion of its members. And if at the moment of highest activity of the market the agricultural districts and the branches least affected by the general prosperity temporarily supply to manufacture a number of workers, these are a mere minority, and these too belong to the reserve army, with the single difference that the prosperity of the moment was required to reveal their connection with it. When they enter upon the more active branches of work, their former employers draw in somewhat, in order to feel the less loss, work longer hours, employ women and younger workers, and when the wanderers discharged at the beginning of the crisis return, they find their places filled and themselves superfluous—at least in the majority of cases. This reserve army, which embraces an immense multitude during the crisis and a large number during the period which may be regarded as the average between the highest prosperity and the crisis, is the "surplus population" of England, which keeps body and soul together by begging, stealing, street-sweeping, collecting manure, pushing handcarts, driving donkeys, peddling, or performing occasional small jobs. In every great town a multitude of such people may be found. It is astonishing in what devices this "surplus population" takes refuge. The London crossing-sweepers are known all over the world; but hitherto the principal streets in all the great cities, as well as the crossings, have been swept by people out of other work, and employed by the Poor Law guardians or the municipal authorities for the purpose. Now, however, a machine has been invented which rattles through the streets daily, and has spoiled this source of income for the unemployed. Along the great highways leading into the cities, on which there is a great deal of wagon traffic, a large number of people may be seen with small carts, gathering fresh horse-dung at the risk of their lives among the passing coaches and omnibuses, often paying a couple of shillings a week to the authorities for the privilege. But this occupation is forbidden in many places, because the ordinary street-sweepings thus impoverished cannot be sold as manure. Happy are such of the "surplus" as can obtain a push-cart and go about with it. Happier still those to whom it is vouchsafed to possess an ass in addition to the cart. The ass must get his own food or is given a little gathered refuse, and can yet bring in a trifle of money. Most of the "surplus" betakes themselves to huckstering. On Saturday afternoons, especially, when the whole working population is on the streets, the crowd who live from huckstering and peddling may be seen. Shoe and corset laces, brushes, twine, casks,
oranges, every kind of small articles are offered by men, women, and children; and at other times also, such peddlers are always to be seen standing at the street corners, or going about with cakes and ginger-beer or nettle-beer. Matches and such things, sealing-wax, and patent mixtures for lighting fires are further resources of such venders. Others, so-called jobbers, go about the streets seeking small jobs. Many of these succeed in getting a day's work, many are not so fortunate.

"At the gates of all the London docks," says the Rev. W. Champney, preacher of the East End, "hundreds of the poor appear every morning in winter before daybreak, in the hope of getting a day's work. They await the opening of the gates; and, when the youngest and strongest and best known have been engaged, hundreds cast down by disappointed hope, go back to their wretched homes."

When these people find no work and will not rebel against society, what remains for them but to beg? And surely no one can wonder at the great army of beggars, most of them able-bodied men, with whom the police carries on perpetual war. But the beggary of these men has a peculiar character. Such a man usually goes about with his family singing a pleasing song in the streets or appealing, in a speech, to the benevolence of the passer-by. And it is a striking fact that these beggars are seen almost exclusively in the working-people's districts, that it is almost exclusively the gifts of the poor from which they live. Or the family takes up its position in a busy street, and without uttering a word, lets the mere sight of its helplessness plead for it. In this case, too, they reckon upon the sympathy of the workers alone, who know from experience how it feels to be hungry, and are liable to find themselves in the same situation at any moment; for this dumb, yet most moving appeal, is met with almost solely in such streets as are frequented by working-men, and at such hours as working-men pass by; but especially on summer evenings, when the "secret" of the working-people's quarters are generally revealed, and the middle-class withdraws as far as possible from the district thus polluted. And he among the "surplus" who has courage and passion enough openly to resist society, to reply with declared war upon the bourgeoisie to the disguised war which the bourgeoisie wages upon him, goes forth to rob, plunder, murder, and burn!

Of this surplus population there are, according to the reports of the Poor Law commissioners, on an average, a million and a half in England and Wales; in Scotland the number cannot be ascertained for want of Poor Law regulations, and with Ireland we shall deal separately. Moreover, this million and a half includes only those who actually apply to the parish for relief; the great multitude who struggle on without recourse to this most hated expedient, it does not embrace. On the other hand, a good part of the number belongs to the agricultural districts, and does not enter into the present discussion. During a crisis this number naturally increases markedly, and want reaches its highest pitch.

Take, for instance, the crisis of 1842, which, being the latest, was the most violent; for the intensity of the crisis increases with each repetition, and the next, which may be expected not later than 1847, will probably be still more violent and lasting. During this crisis the poor-rates rose in every town to a hitherto unknown height. In Stockport, among other towns, for every pound paid in house-rent, eight shillings of poor-rate had to be paid, so that the rate alone formed forty per cent. of the house-rent. Moreover, whole streets stood vacant, so that there were at least twenty thousand fewer inhabitants than usual, and on the doors of the empty houses might be read: "Stockport to let." In Bolton, where, in ordinary years, the rents from which rates are paid average £86,000, they sank to £36,000. The number of the poor to be supported rose, on the other hand, to 14,000, or more than twenty per cent. of the whole number of inhabitants. In Leeds, the Poor Law guardians had a reserve fund of £10,000. This, with a contribution of £7,000, was wholly exhausted before the crisis reached its height. So it was everywhere. A report drawn up in January, 1843, by a committee of the Anti-Corn Law

\[1\] And it came in 1847.
League, on the condition of the industrial districts in 1842, which was based upon detailed statements of the manufacturers, asserts that the poor-rate was, taking the average, twice as high as in 1839, and that the number of persons requiring relief has trebled, even quintupled, since that time; that a multitude of applicants belong to a class which had never before solicited relief; that the working-class commands more than two-thirds less of the means of subsistence than from 1884-1836; that the consumption of meat had been decidedly less, in some places twenty per cent., in others reaching sixty per cent. less; that even handicraftsmen, smiths, bricklayers, and others, who usually have full employment in the most depressed periods, now suffered greatly from want of work and reduction of wages; and that, even now, in January, 1843, wages are still steadily falling. And these are the reports of manufacturers! The starving workmen, whose mills were idle, whose employers could give them no work, stood in the streets in all directions, begged singly or in crowds, besieged the sidewalks in armies, and appealed to the passers-by for help; they begged, not cringing like ordinary beggars, but threatening by their numbers, their gestures, and their words. Such was the state of things in all the industrial districts, from Leicester to Leeds, and from Manchester to Birmingham. Here and there disturbances arose, as in the Staffordshire potteries, in July. The most frightful excitement prevailed among the workers until the general insurrection broke out throughout the manufacturing districts in August. When I came to Manchester in November, 1842, there were crowds of unemployed working-men at every street corner, and many mills were still standing idle. In the following months these unwilling corner loafers gradually vanished, and the factories came into activity once more.

To what extent want and suffering prevail among these unemployed during such a crisis, I need not describe. The poor-rates are insufficient, vastly insufficient; the philanthropy of the rich is a rain-drop in the ocean, lost in the moment of falling, begging can support but few among the crowds. If the small dealers did not sell to the working-people on credit at such times as long as possible—paying themselves liberally afterwards, it must be confessed—and if the working-people did not help each other, every crisis would remove a multitude of the surplus through death by starvation. Since, however, the most depressed period is brief, lasting, at worst, but one, two, or two and a half years, most of them emerge from it with their lives after dire privations. But indirectly by disease, etc., every crisis finds a multitude of victims, as we shall see. First, however, let us turn to another cause of abasement to which the English worker is exposed, a cause permanently active in forcing the whole class downwards.
IRISH IMMIGRATION.

We have already referred several times in passing to the Irish who have immigrated into England; and we shall now have to investigate more closely the causes and results of this immigration.

The rapid extension of English industry could not have taken place if England had not possessed in the numerous and impoverished population of Ireland a reserve at command. The Irish had nothing to lose at home, and much to gain in England; and from the time when it became known in Ireland that the east side of St. George's Channel offered steady work and good pay for strong arms, every year has brought armies of the Irish hither. It has been calculated that more than a million have already immigrated, and not far from fifty thousand still come every year, nearly all of whom enter the industrial districts, especially the great cities, and there form the lowest class of the population. Thus there are in London, 120,000; in Manchester, 40,000; in Liverpool, 34,000; Bristol, 24,000; Glasgow, 40,000; Edinburgh, 29,000, poor Irish people. These people having grown up almost without civilization, accustomed from youth to every sort of privation, rough, intemperate, and improvident, bring all their brutal habits with them among a class of the English population which has, in truth, little inducement to cultivate education and morality. Let us hear Thomas Carlyle upon this subject: 2

"The wild Milesian features, looking false ingenuity, rootlessness, unreason, misery, and mockery, salute you on all highways and byways. The English coachman, as he whirls past, lashes the

1 Archibald Alison, "Principles of Population and their Connection with Human Happiness," two vols., 1849. This Alison is the historian of the French Revolution, and, like his brother, Dr. W. P. Alison, a religious Tory.

2 "Chartism," pp. 28, 31, etc.

Milesean with his whip, curses him with his tongue; the Milesian is holding out his hat to beg. He is the sorest evil this country has to strive with. In his rage and laughing savagery, he is there to undertake all work that can be done by mere strength of hand and back—for wages that will purchase him potatoes. He needs only salt for condiment, he lodges to his mind in any pig-hutch or dog-hutch, roosts in outhouses, and wears a suit of tatters, the getting on and off of which is said to be a difficult operation, transacted only in festivals and the high tides of the calendar. The Saxon-man, if he cannot work on these terms, finds no work. The uncivilized Irishman, not by his strength, but by the opposite of strength, drives the Saxon native out, takes possession in his room. There abides he, in his squalor and unreason, in his falsity and drunken violence, as the ready-made nucleus of degradation and disorder. Whoever struggles, swimming with difficulty, may now find an example how the human being can exist not swimming, but sunk. That the condition of the lower multitude of English labourers approximates more and more to that of the Irish, competing with them in all the markets: that whatsoever labour, to which mere strength with little skill will suffice, is to be done, will be done not at the English price, but at an approximation to the Irish price; at a price superior as yet to the Irish, that is, superior to scarcity of potatoes for thirty weeks yearly; superior, yet hourly, with the arrival of every new steamboat, sinking nearer to an equality with that."

If we except his exaggerated and one-sided condemnation of the Irish national character, Carlyle is perfectly right. These Irishmen who migrate for penury to England, on the deck of a steamship on which they are often packed like cattle, insinuate themselves everywhere. The worst dwellings are good enough for them; their clothing causes them little trouble, so long as it holds together by a single thread; shoes they know not; their food consists of potatoes and potatoes only; whatever they earn beyond these needs they spend upon drink. What does such a race want with high wages? The worst quarters of all the large towns are inhabited by Irishmen. Whenever a district is distinguished for especial filth and especial ruminess, the explorer may safely count upon meeting chiefly those Celtic faces which one recognizes at the first glance as different from the Saxon physiognomy of the
native, and the singing, aspirate brogue which the true Irishman never loses. I have occasionally heard the Irish-Celtic language spoken in the most thickly populated parts of Manchester. The majority of the families who live in cellars are almost everywhere of Irish origin. In short, the Irish have, as Dr. Kay says, discovered the minimum of the necessities of life, and are now making the English workers acquainted with it. Filth and drunkenness, too, they have brought with them. The lack of cleanliness, which is not so injurious in the country, where population is scattered, and which is the Irishman’s second nature, becomes terrifying and gravely dangerous through its concentration here in the great cities. The Milesian deposits all garbage and filth before his house door here, as he was accustomed to do at home, and so accumulates the pools and dirt-heaps which disfigure the working-people’s quarters and poison the air. He builds a pig sty against the house wall as he did at home, and if he is prevented from doing this, he lets the pig sleep in the room with himself. This new and unnatural method of cattle-raising in cities is wholly of Irish origin. The Irishman loves his pig as the Arab his horse, with the difference that he sells it when it is fat enough to kill. Otherwise, he eats and sleeps with it, his children play with it, ride upon it, roll in the dirt with it, as any one may see a thousand times repeated in all the great towns of England. The filth and comfortlessness that prevail in the houses themselves it is impossible to describe. The Irishman is unaccustomed to the presence of furniture; a heap of straw, a few rags, utterly beyond use as clothing, suffice for his nightly couch. A piece of wood, a broken chair, an old chest for a table, more he needs not; a tea-kettle, a few pots and dishes, equip his kitchen, which is also his sleeping and living room. When he is in want of fuel, everything combustible within his reach, chairs, door-posts, mouldings, flooring, finds its way up the chimney. Moreover, why should he need much room? At home in his mud-cabin there was only one room for all domestic purposes; more than one room his family does not need in England. So the custom of crowding many persons into a single room, now so universal, has been chiefly implanted by the Irish immigration. And since the poor devil must have one enjoyment, and society has shut him out of all others, he betakes himself to the drinking of spirits. Drink is the only thing which makes the Irishman’s life worth having; drink and his cheery care-free temperament; so he revels in drink to the point of the most bestial drunkenness. The southern facile character of the Irishman, his crudity, which places him but little above the savage, his contempt for all humane enjoyments, in which his very crudeness makes him incapable of sharing, his filth and poverty, all favour drunkenness. The temptation is great, he cannot resist it, and so when he has money he gets rid of it down his throat. What else should he do? How can society blame him when it places him in a position in which he almost of necessity becomes a drunkard; when it leaves him to himself, to his savagery? With such a competitor the English working-man has to struggle with a competitor upon the lowest plane possible in a civilised country, who for this very reason requires less wages than any other. Nothing else is therefore possible than that, as Carlyle says, the wages of English working-men should be forced down further and further in every branch in which the Irish compete with him. And these branches are many. All such as demand little or no skill are open to the Irish. For work which requires long training or regular, pertinacious application, the dissolute, unsteady, drunken Irishman is on too low a plane. To become a mechanic, a mill-hand, he would have to adopt the English civilisation, the English customs, become, in the main, an Englishman. But for all simple, less exact work, wherever it is a question more of strength than skill, the Irishman is as good as the Englishman. Such occupations are therefore especially overcrowded with Irishmen: handweavers, bricklayers, porters, jobbers, and such workers, count hordes of Irishmen among their number, and the pressure of this race has done much to depress wages and lower the working-class. And even if the Irish, who have forced their way into other occupations, should become more civilised, enough of the old habits would cling to them to have a strong degrading influence upon their English companions in toil, especially in view of the
general effect of being surrounded by the Irish. For when, in almost every great city, a fifth or a quarter of the workers are Irish, or children of Irish parents, who have grown up among Irish filth, no one can wonder if the life, habits, intelligence, moral status—in short, the whole character of the working-class assimilates a great part of the Irish characteristics. On the contrary, it is easy to understand how the degrading position of the English workers, engendered by our modern history, and its immediate consequences, has been still more degraded by the presence of Irish competition.

RESULTS.

HAVING NOW INVESTIGATED, somewhat in detail, the conditions under which the English working-class lives, it is time to draw some further inferences from the facts presented, and then to compare our inferences with the actual state of things. Let us see what the workers themselves have become under the given circumstances, what sort of people they are, what their physical, mental, and moral status.

When one individual inflicts bodily injury upon another, such injury that death results, we call the deed manslaughter; when the assaulter knew in advance that the injury would be fatal, we call his deed murder. But when society places hundreds of proletarians in such a position that they inevitably meet a too early and an unnatural death, one which is quite as much a death by violence as that by the sword or bullet; when it deprives thousands of the necessaries of life, places them under conditions in which they cannot live—forces them, through the strong arm of the law, to remain in such conditions until that death ensues which is the inevitable consequence—knows that these thousands of victims must perish, and yet permits these conditions to remain, its deed is murder just as surely as the deed of the single individual; disguised, malicious murder, murder against which 1

1 When as here and elsewhere I speak of society as a responsible whole, having rights and duties, I mean, of course, the ruling power of society, the class which at present holds social and political control, and bears, therefore, the responsibility for the conduct of those to whom it grants no share in such control. This ruling class in England, as in all other civilised countries, is the bourgeoisie. But that this society, and especially the bourgeoisie, is charged with the duty of protecting every member of society, at least, in his life, to see to it, for example, that no one starves, I need not now prove to my German readers. If I were writing for the English bourgeoisie, the case would be different. (And so it is now in Germany. Our German capitalists are fully up to the English level, in this respect at least, in the year of grace, 1886.)
none can defend himself, which does not seem what it is, because no man sees the murderer, because the death of the victim seems a natural one, since the offence is more one of omission than of commission. But murder it remains. I have now to prove that society in England daily and hourly commits what the working-men's organs, with perfect correctness, characterise as social murder, that it has placed the workers under conditions in which they can neither retain health nor live long; that it undermines the vital force of these workers gradually, little by little, and so hurries them to the grave before their time. I have further to prove that society knows how injurious such conditions are to the health and the life of the workers, and yet does nothing to improve these conditions. That it knows the consequences of its deeds; that its act is, therefore, not mere manslaughter, but murder, I shall have proved, when I cite official documents, reports of Parliament and of the Government, in substantiation of my charge.

That a class which lives under the conditions already sketched and is so ill-provided with the most necessary means of subsistence, cannot be healthy and can reach no advanced age, is self-evident. Let us review the circumstances once more with special reference to the health of the workers. The centralisation of population in great cities exercises of itself an unfavourable influence; the atmosphere of London can never be so pure, so rich in oxygen, as the air of the country; two and a half million pairs of lungs, two hundred and fifty thousand fires, crowded upon an area three to four miles square, consume an enormous amount of oxygen, which is replaced with difficulty, because the method of building cities in itself impedes ventilation. The carbonic acid gas, engendered by respiration and fire, remains in the streets by reason of its specific gravity, and the chief air current passes over the roofs of the city. The lungs of the inhabitants fail to receive the due supply of oxygen, and the consequence is mental and physicalasto and low vitality. For this reason, the dwellers in cities are far less exposed to acute, and especially to inflammatory, affections than rural populations, who live in a free, normal atmosphere; but they suffer the more from chronic affections. And if life in large cities is, in itself, injurious to health, how great must be the harmful influence of an abnormal atmosphere in the working-people's quarters, where, as we have seen, everything combines to poison the air. In the country, it may, perhaps, be comparatively innocuous to keep a dung-heap adjoining one's dwelling, because the air has free ingress from all sides; but in the midst of a large town, among closely built lanes and courts that shut out all movement of the atmosphere, the case is different. All putrefying vegetable and animal substances give off gases decidedly injurious to health, and if these gases have no free way of escape, they inevitably poison the atmosphere. The filth and stagnant pools of the working-people's quarters in the great cities have, therefore, the worst effect upon the public health, because they produce precisely those gases which engender disease; so, too, the exhalations from contaminated streams. But this is by no means all. The manner in which the great multitude of the poor is treated by society to-day is revolting. They are drawn into the large cities where they breathe a poorer atmosphere than in the country; they are relegated to districts which, by reason of the method of construction, are worse ventilated than any others; they are deprived of all means of cleanliness, of water itself, since pipes are laid only when paid for, and the rivers so polluted that they are useless for such purposes; they are obliged to throw all offal and garbage, all dirty water, often all disgusting drainage and excrement into the streets, being without other means of disposing of them; they are thus compelled to infect the region of their own dwellings. Nor is this enough. All conceivable evils are heaped upon the heads of the poor. If the population of great cities is too dense in general, it is they in particular who are packed into the least space. As though the vitiated atmosphere of the streets were not enough, they are penned in dozens into single rooms, so that the air which they breathe at night is enough in itself to stifle them. They are given damp dwellings, cellar dens that are not waterproof from below, or garrets that leak from above. Their houses are so built that the clammy air cannot escape. They are
supplied bad, tattered, or rotten clothing, adulterated and indigestible food. They are exposed to the most exciting changes of mental condition, the most violent vibrations between hope and fear; they are hunted like game, and not permitted to attain peace of mind and quiet enjoyment of life. They are deprived of all enjoyment except that of sexual indulgence and drunkenness, are worked every day to the point of complete exhaustion of their mental and physical energies, and are thus constantly spurred on to the maddest excess in the only two enjoyments at their command. And if they surmount all this, they fall victims to want of work in a crisis when all the little is taken from them that had hitherto been vouchsafed them.

How is it possible, under such conditions, for the lower class to be healthy and long lived? What else can be expected than an excessive mortality, an unbroken series of epidemics, a progressive deterioration in the physique of the working population? Let us see how the facts stand.

That the dwellings of the workers in the worst portions of the cities, together with the other conditions of life of this class, engender numerous diseases, is attested on all sides. The article already quoted from the *Artisan* asserts with perfect truth, that lung diseases must be the inevitable consequence of such conditions; and that, indeed, cases of this kind are disproportionately frequent in this class. That the bad air of London, and especially of the working-people’s districts, is in the highest degree favourable to the development of consumption, the hectic appearance of great numbers of persons sufficiently indicates. If one roams the streets a little in the early morning, when the multitudes are on their way to their work, one is amazed at the number of persons who look wholly or half-consumptive. Even in Manchester the people have not the same appearance; these pale, lank, narrow-chested, hollow-eyed ghosts, whom one passes at every step, these languid, flabby faces, incapable of the slightest energetic expression, I have seen in such startling numbers only in London, though consumption carries off a horde of victims annually in the factory towns of the North. In competition with consumption stands typhus, to say nothing of scarlet fever, a disease which brings most frightful devastation into the ranks of the working-class. Typhus, that universally diffused affliction, is attributed by the official report on the sanitary condition of the working-class, directly to the bad state of the dwellings in the matters of ventilation, drainage, and cleanliness. This report, compiled, it must not be forgotten, by the leading physicians of England from the testimony of other physicians, asserts that a single ill-ventilated court, a single blind alley without drainage, is enough to engender fever, and usually does engender it, especially if the inhabitants are greatly crowded. This fever has the same character almost everywhere, and develops in nearly every case into specific typhus. It is to be found in the working-people’s quarters of all great towns and cities, and in single ill-built, ill-kept streets of smaller places, though it naturally seeks out single victims in better districts also. In London it has now prevailed for a considerable time; its extraordinary violence in the year 1837 gave rise to the report already referred to. According to the annual report of Dr. Southwood Smith on the London Fever Hospital, the number of patients in 1843 was 1,462, or 418 more than in any previous year. In the damp, dirty regions of the north, south, and east districts of London, this disease raged with extraordinary violence. Many of the patients were working-people from the country, who had endured the severest privation while migrating, and, after their arrival, had slept hungry and half-naked in the streets, and so fallen victims to the fever. These people were brought into the hospital in such a state of weakness, that unusual quantities of wine, cognac, and preparations of ammonia and other stimulants were required for their treatment; 16½ per cent. of all patients died. This malignant fever is to be found in Manchester; in the worst quarters of the Old Town, Accrington, Little Ireland, etc., it is rarely extinct; though here, as in the English towns generally, it prevails to a less extent than might be expected. In Scotland and Ireland, on the other hand, it rages with a violence that surpasses all conception. In Edinburgh and Glasgow it broke out in 1817, after the famine, and in 1826 and 1837 with especial violence, after
the commercial crisis, subsiding somewhat each time after having raged about three years. In Edinburgh about 6,000 persons were attacked by the fever during the epidemic of 1817, and about 10,000 in that of 1887, and not only the number of persons attacked but the violence of the disease increased with each repetition.  

But the fury of the epidemic in all former periods seems to have been child's play in comparison with its ravages after the crisis of 1842. One-sixth of the whole indigent population of Scotland was seized by the fever, and the infection was carried by wandering beggars with fearful rapidity from one locality to another. It did not reach the middle and upper classes of the population, yet in two months there were more fever cases than in twelve years before. In Glasgow, twelve per cent. of the population were seized in the year 1843; 32,000 persons, of whom thirty-two per cent. perished, while this mortality in Manchester and Liverpool does not ordinarily exceed eight per cent. The illness reached a crisis on the seventh and fifteenth days; on the latter, the patient usually became yellow, which our authority regards as an indication that the cause of the malady was to be sought in mental excitement and anxiety. In Ireland, too, these fever epidemics have become domesticated. During twenty-one months of the years 1817-1818, 39,000 fever patients passed through the Dublin hospital; and in a more recent year, according to Sheriff Alixson, 60,000. In Cork the fever hospital received one-seventh of the population in 1817-1818, in Limerick in the same time one-fourth, and in the bad quarter of Waterford, nineteen-twentieths of the whole population were ill of the fever at one time.

When one remembers under what conditions the working-people live, when one thinks how crowded their dwellings are, how every nook and corner swarms with human beings, how sick and well sleep in the same room, in the same bed, the only wonder is that a contagious disease like this fever does not spread...
nourishment, during the years of growth and development, is rachitic, which is extremely common among the children of the working-class. The hardening of the bones is delayed, the development of the skeleton in general is restricted, and deformities of the legs and spinal column are frequent, in addition to the usual rachitic affections. How greatly all these evils are increased by the changes to which the workers are subject in consequence of fluctuations in trade, want of work, and the scanty wages in time of crisis, it is not necessary to dwell upon. Temporary want of sufficient food, to which almost every working-man is exposed at least once in the course of his life, only contributes to intensify the effects of his usual sufficient but bad diet. Children who are half-starved, just when they most need ample and nutritious food—and how many such there are during every crisis and even when trade is at its best—must inevitably become weak, scrofulous and rachitic in a high degree. And that they do become so, their appearance amply shows. The neglect to which the great mass of working-men’s children are condemned leaves ineradicable traces and brings the enfeeblement of the whole race of workers with it. Add to this, the unsuitable clothing of this class, the impossibility of precautions against colds, the necessity of toiling so long as health permits, want made more dire when sickness appears, and the only too common lack of all medical assistance; and we have a rough idea of the sanitary condition of the English working-class. The injurious effects peculiar to single employments as now conducted, I shall not deal with here.

Besides these, there are other influences which enfeebles the health of a great number of workers, intemperance most of all. All possible temptations, all allurements combine to bring the workers to drunkenness. Liquor is almost their only source of pleasure, and all things conspire to make it accessible to them. The working-man comes from his work tired, exhausted, finds his home comfortless, damp, dirty, repulsive; he has urgent need of recreation, he must have something to make work worth his trouble, to make the prospect of the next day endurable. His unnerved, uncomfortable, hypochondriac state of mind and body arising from his unhealthy condition, and especially from indigestion, is aggravated beyond endurance by the general conditions of his life, the uncertainty of his existence, his dependence upon all possible accidents and chances, and his inability to do anything towards gaining an assured position. His enfeebled frame, weakened by bad air and bad food, violently demands some external stimulus; his social need can be gratified only in the public-house, he has absolutely no other place where he can meet his friends. How can he be expected to resist the temptation? It is morally and physically inevitable that, under such circumstances, a very large number of working-men should fall into intemperance. And apart from the chiefly physical influences which drive the working-man into drunkenness, there is the example of the great mass, the neglected education, the impossibility of protecting the young from temptation, in many cases the direct influence of intemperate parents, who give their own children liquor, the certainty of forgetting for an hour or two the wretchedness and burden of life, and a hundred other circumstances so mighty that the workers can, in truth, hardly be blamed for yielding to such overwhelming pressure. Drunkenness has here ceased to be a vice, for which the vicious can be held responsible; it becomes a phenomenon, the necessary, inevitable effect of certain conditions upon an object possessed of no volition in relation to those conditions. They who have degraded the working-man to a mere object have the responsibility to bear. But as inevitably as a great number of working-men fall a prey to drink, just so inevitably does it manifest its ruinous influence upon the body and mind of its victims. All the tendencies to disease arising from the conditions of life of the workers are promoted by it, it stimulates in the highest degree the development of lung and digestive troubles, the rise and spread of typhus epidemics.

Another source of physical mischief to the working-class lies in the impossibility of employing skilled physicians in cases of illness. It is true that a number of charitable institutions strive to supply this want, that the infirmary in Manchester, for instance, receives or gives advice and medicine to 2,200 patients annually. But
what is that in a city in which, according to Gaskell's calculation, three-fourths of the population need medical aid every year? English doctors charge high fees, and working-men are not in a position to pay them. They can therefore do nothing, or are compelled to call in cheap charlatans, and use quack remedies, which do more harm than good. An immense number of such quacks thrive in every English town, securing their clientele among the poor by means of advertisements, posters, and other such devices. Besides these, vast quantities of patent medicines are sold, for all conceivable ailments: Morrison's Pills, Parr's Life Pills, Dr. Mainwaring's Pills, and a thousand other pills, essences, and balsams, all of which have the property of curing all the ills that flesh is heir to. These medicines rarely contain actually injurious substances, but, when taken freely and often, they affect the system prejudicially; and as the unwary purchasers are always recommended to take as much as possible, it is not to be wondered at that they swallow them wholesale whether wanted or not.

It is by no means unusual for the manufacturer of Parr's Life Pills to sell twenty to twenty-five thousand boxes of these salutary pills in a week, and they are taken for constipation by this one, for diarrhea by that one, for fever, weakness, and all possible ailments. As our German peasants are cupped or bled at certain seasons, so do the English working-people now consume patent medicines to their own injury and the great profit of the manufacturer. One of the most injurious of these patent medicines is a drink prepared with opiates, chiefly laudanum, under the name Godfrey's Cordial. Women who work at home, and have their own and other people's children to take care of, give them this drink to keep them quiet, and, as many believe, to strengthen them. They often begin to give this medicine to newly-born children, and continue, without knowing the effects of this "heart-ease," until the children die. The less susceptible the child's system to the action of the opium, the greater the quantities administered. When the cordial ceases to act, laudanum alone is given, often to the extent of fifteen to twenty drops at a dose.


The Coroner of Nottingham testified before a Parliamentary Commission that one apothecary had, according to his own statement, used thirteen hundredweight of laudanum in one year in the preparation of Godfrey's Cordial. The effects upon the children so treated may be readily imagined. They are pale, feeble, wizened, and usually die before completing the second year. The use of this cordial is very extensive in all great towns and industrial districts in the kingdom.

The result of all these influences is a general enfeeblement of the frame in the working-class. There are few vigorous, well-built, healthy persons among the workers, i.e., among the factory operatives, who are employed in confined rooms, and we are here discussing these only. They are almost all weakly, of angular but not powerful build, lean, pale, and of relaxed fibre, with the exception of the muscles especially exercised in their work. Nearly all suffer from indigestion, and consequently from a more or less hypochondriac, melancholy, irritable, nervous condition. Their enfeebled constitutions are unable to resist disease, and are therefore seized by it on every occasion. Hence they age prematurely, and die early. On this point the mortality statistics supply unquestionable testimony.

According to the Report of Registrar-General Graham, the annual death-rate of all England and Wales is something less than 2% per cent. That is to say, out of forty-five persons, one dies every year. \(^n\) This was the average for the year 1839-40. In 1840-41 the mortality diminished somewhat, and the death-rate was but one in forty-six. But in the great cities the proportion is wholly different. I have before me official tables of mortality (Manchester Guardian, July 31st, 1844), according to which the death-rate of several large towns is as follows:—In Manchester,


including Chorlton and Salford, one in 32·72; and excluding Chorlton and Salford, one in 30·75. In Liverpool, including West Derby (suburb), 31·90, and excluding West Derby, 39·90; while the average of all the districts of Cheshire, Lancashire, and Yorkshire cited, including a number of wholly or partially rural districts and many small towns, with a total population of 2,172,566 for the whole, is one death in 39·90 persons. How unfavourably the workers are placed in the great cities, the mortality for Prescott in Lancashire shows: a district inhabited by miners, and showing a lower sanitary condition than that of the agricultural districts, mining being by no means a healthful occupation. But these miners live in the country, and the death-rate among them is but one in 47·34, or nearly two-and-a-half per cent. better than that for all England. All these statements are based upon the mortality tables for 1843. Still higher is the death-rate in the Scotch cities; in Edinburgh, in 1838-39, one in 29; in 1851, in the Old Town alone, one in 22. In Glasgow, according to Dr. Cowen, the average has been, since 1830, one in 30; and in single years, one in 22 to 24. That this enormous shortening of life falls chiefly upon the working-class, that the general average is improved by the smaller mortality of the upper and middle-classes, is attested upon all sides. One of the most recent depositions is that of a physician, Dr. P. B. Holland, in Manchester, who investigated Chorlton-on-Medlock, a suburb of Manchester, under official commission. He divided the houses and streets into three classes each, and ascertained the following variations in the death-rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Houses</th>
<th>I.</th>
<th>II.</th>
<th>III.</th>
<th>Mortality one in</th>
<th>wanting —</th>
<th>Mortality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Dr. Cowen. "Vital Statistics of Glasgow."

It is clear from other tables given by Holland that the mortality in the streets of the second class is 18 per cent. greater, and in the streets of the third class 68 per cent. greater than in those of the first class; that the mortality in the houses of the second class is 31 per cent greater, and in the third class 73 per cent. greater than in those of the first class; that the mortality in those bad streets which were improved, decreased 25 per cent. He closes with the remark, very frank for an English bourgeois:

"When we find the rate of mortality four times as high in some streets as in others, and twice as high in whole classes of streets as in other classes, and further find that it is all but invariably high in those streets which are in bad condition, and almost invariably low in those whose condition is good, we cannot resist the conclusion that multitudes of our fellow-creatures, hundreds of our immediate neighbours, are annually destroyed for want of the most evident precautions."

The Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Working-Class contains information which attests the same fact. In Liverpool, in 1840, the average longevity of the upper-classes, gentry, professional men, etc., was thirty-five years; that of the business men and better-placed handicraftsmen, twenty-two years; and that of the operatives, day-labourers, and serviceable class in general, but fifteen years. The Parliamentary reports contain a mass of similar facts.

The death-rate is kept so high chiefly by the heavy mortality among young children in the working-class. The tender frame of a child is least able to withstand the unfavourable influences of an inferior lot in life; the neglect to which they are often subjected, when both parents work or one is dead, avenges itself promptly, and no one need wonder that in Manchester, according to the report last quoted, more than fifty-seven per cent. of the children of the working-class perished before the fifth year, while but twenty per cent. of the children of the higher classes, and not quite thirty-two per cent. of the children of all classes in the

country die under five years of age. The article of the Artisan, already several times referred to, furnishes exacter information on this point, by comparing the city death-rate in single cases of deaths of children with the country death-rate, thus demonstrating that, in general, epidemics in Manchester and Liverpool are three times more fatal than in country districts; that affections of the nervous system are quintupled, and stomach troubles trebled, while deaths from affections of the lungs in cities are to those in the country as $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1. Fatal cases of smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, and whooping cough, among small children, are four times more frequent; those of water on the brain are trebled, and convulsions ten times more frequent. To quote another acknowledged authority, I append the following table. Out of 10,000 persons, there died—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>deaths</th>
<th>health</th>
<th>agricultural districts</th>
<th>industrial districts</th>
<th>Town of Castle, 1776</th>
<th>1791</th>
<th>deploration of mills</th>
<th>Preston, factory town</th>
<th>Leeds, factory town</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys, men, and women</td>
<td>2,105</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>2,175</td>
<td>1,799</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>1,838</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>5,122</td>
<td>1,516</td>
<td>5,638</td>
<td>4,938</td>
<td>4,938</td>
<td>4,938</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the various diseases which are the necessary consequence of the present neglect and oppression of the poorer classes, there are other influences which contribute to increase the mortality among small children. In many families the wife, like the husband, has to work away from home, and the consequence is the total neglect of the children, who are either locked up or given out to be taken care of. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at if hundreds of them perish through all manner of accidents. Nowhere are so many children run over, nowhere are so many killed by falling, drowning, or burning, as in the great cities and towns of England. Deaths from burns and scalds are especially frequent, such a case occurring nearly every week during the winter months in Manchester, and very frequently in London, though little mention is made of them in the papers. I have at hand a copy of the Weekly Dispatch of December 15th, 1844, according to which, in the week from December 1st to December 7th inclusive, six such cases occurred. These unhappy children, perishing in this terrible way, are victims of our social disorder, and of the property-holding classes interested in maintaining and prolonging this disorder. Yet one is left in doubt whether even this terribly torturing death is not a blessing for the children in rescuing them from a long life of toil and wretchedness, rich in suffering and poor in enjoyment. So far has it gone in England; and the bourgeoisie reads these things every day in the newspapers and takes no further trouble in the matter. But it cannot complain if, after the official and non-official testimony here cited which must be known to it, I broadly accuse it of social murder. Let the ruling class see to it that these frightful conditions are ameliorated, or let it surrender the administration of the common interests to the labouring-class. To the latter course it is by no means inclined; for the former task, so long as it remains the bourgeoisie crippled by bourgeois prejudice, it has not the needed power. For if, at last, after hundreds of thousands of victims have perished, it manifests some little anxiety for the future, passing a "Metropolitan Buildings Act," under which the most unscrupulous overcrowding of dwellings is to be, at least in some slight degree, restricted; if it points with pride to measures which, far from attacking the root of the evil, do not by any means meet the demands of the commonest sanitary policy, it cannot thus vindicate itself from the accusation. The English bourgeoisie has but one choice, either to continue its rule under the unanswerable charge of murder, and in spite of this charge, or to abdicate in favour of the labouring-class. Hitherto it has chosen the former course. Let us turn from the physical to the mental state of the workers. Since the bourgeoisie vouchsafe them only so much of life as is
absolutely necessary, we need not wonder that it bestows upon them only so much education as lies in the interest of the bourgeoisie; and that, in truth, is not much. The means of education in England are restricted out of all proportion to the population. The few day schools at the command of the working-class are available only for the smallest minority, and are bad besides. The teachers, worn-out workers, and other unsuitable persons who only turn to teaching in order to live, are usually without the indispensable elementary knowledge, without the moral discipline so needful for the teacher, and relieved of all public supervision. Here, too, free competition rules, and, as usual, the rich profit by it, and the poor, for whom competition is not free, who have not the knowledge needed to enable them to form a correct judgment, have the evil consequences to bear. Compulsory school attendance does not exist. In the mills it is, as we shall see, purely nominal; and when in the session of 1843 the Ministry was disposed to make this nominal compulsion effective, the manufacturing bourgeoisie opposed the measure with all its might, though the working-class was outspokenly in favour of compulsory school attendance. Moreover, a mass of children work the whole week through in the mills or at home, and therefore cannot attend school. The evening schools, supposed to be attended by children who are employed during the day, are almost abandoned or attended without benefit. It is asking too much, that young workers who have been using themselves up twelve hours in the day, should go to school from eight to ten at night. And those who try it usually fall asleep, as is testified by hundreds of witnesses in the Children’s Employment Commission’s Report. Sunday schools have been founded, it is true, but they, too, are most scantily supplied with teachers, and can be of use to those only who have already learnt something in the day schools. The interval from one Sunday to the next is too long for an ignorant child to remember in the second sitting what it learned in the first, a week before. The Children’s Employment Commission’s Report furnishes a hundred proofs, and the Commission itself most emphatically expresses the opinion, that neither the week-day nor the Sunday schools, in the least degree, meet the needs of the nation. This report gives evidence of ignorance in the working-class of England, such as could hardly be expected in Spain or Italy. It cannot be otherwise; the bourgeoisie has little to hope, and much to fear, from the education of the working-class. The Ministry, in its whole enormous budget of £35,000,000, has only the single trifling item of £40,000 for public education, and, but for the fanaticism of the religious sects which does at least as much harm as good, the means of education would be yet more scanty. As it is, the State Church manages its national schools and the various sects their sectarian schools for the sole purpose of keeping the children of the brethren of the faith within the congregation, and of winning away a poor childish soul here and there from some other sect. The consequence is that religion, and precisely the most unprofitable side of religion, polemical discussion, is made the principal subject of instruction, and the memory of the children overburdened with incomprehensible dogmas and theological distinctions; that sectarian hatred and bigotry are awakened as early as possible, and all rational mental and moral training shamefully neglected. The working-class has repeatedly demanded of Parliament a system of strictly secular public education, leaving religion to the ministers of the sects; but, thus far, no Ministry has been induced to grant it. The Minister is the obedient servant of the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie is divided into countless sects; but each would gladly grant the workers the otherwise dangerous education on the sole condition of their accepting, as an antidote, the dogmas peculiar to the especial sect in question. And as these sects are still quarrelling among themselves for supremacy, the workers remain for the present without education. It is true that the manufacturers boast of having enabled the majority to read, but the quality of the reading is inappropriate to the source of the instruction, as the Children’s Employment Commission proves. According to this report, he who knows his letters can read enough to satisfy the conscience of the manufacturers. And when one reflects upon the confused orthography of the English language which makes reading
one of the arts, learned only under long instruction, this ignorance is readily understood. Very few working-people write readily; and writing orthographically is beyond the powers of many "educated" persons. The Sunday schools of the State Church, of the Quakers, and, I think, of several other sects, do not teach writing, "because it is too worldly an employment for Sunday." The quality of the instruction offered the workers in other directions may be judged from a specimen or two, taken from the Children's Employment Commission's Report, which unfortunately does not embrace mill-work proper:

"In Birmingham," says Commissioner Granger, "the children examined by me are, as a whole, utterly wanting in all that could be in the remotest degree called a useful education. Although in almost all the schools religious instruction alone is furnished, the profoundest ignorance even upon that subject prevailed."* In Wolverhampton," says Commissioner Horne, "I found, among others, the following example: A girl of eleven years had attended both day and Sunday school, had never heard of another world, of Heaven, or another life. A boy, seventeen years old, did not know that twice two are four, nor how many farthings in two pence even when the money was placed in his hand. Several boys had never heard of London nor of Witleyhall, though the latter was but an hour's walk from their homes, and in the closest relations with Wolverhampton. Several had never heard the name of the Queen nor other names, such as Nelson, Wellington, Bonaparte; but it was noteworthy that those who had never heard even of St. Paul, Moses, or Solomon, were very well instructed as to the life, deeds, and character of Dick Turpin, and especially of Jack Sheppard. A youth of sixteen did not know how many twice two are, nor how much four farthings make. A youth of seventeen asserted that four farthings are four half pence; a third, seventeen years old, answered several very simple questions with the brief statement, that he 'was no judge o' nothin'."* These children who are crammed with religious doctrines four or five years at a stretch, know as little at the end as at the beginning. One child went to Sunday school regularly for five years; does not know who Jesus Christ is, but had heard the name; had never heard of the twelve Apostles, Samuel, Moses, Aaron, etc.*

Another, "attended Sunday school regularly six years; knows who Jesus Christ was; he died on the Cross to save our Saviour; had never heard of St. Peter or St. Paul."* A third, "attended different Sunday schools seven years; can read only the thin, easy books with simple words of one syllable; has heard of the Apostles, but does not know whether St. Peter was one or St. John; the latter must have been St. John Wesley."* To the question who Christ was, Horne received the following answers among others: "He was Adam," "He was an Apostle," "He was the Saviour's Lord's Son," and from a youth of sixteen: "He was a king of London long ago."* In Sheffield, Commissioner Symonds let the children from the Sunday school read aloud; they could not tell what they had read, or what sort of people the Apostles were, of whom they had just been reading. After he had asked them one after the other about the Apostles without securing a single correct answer, one sly-looking little fellow, with great glee, called out: "I know, mister; they were the lepers!"* From the pottery districts and from Lancashire the reports are similar.

This is what the bourgeoisie and the State are doing for the education and improvement of the working-class. Fortunately the conditions under which this class lives are such as give it a sort of practical training, which not only replaces school cramming, but renders harmless the confused religious notions connected with it, and even places the workers in the vanguard of the national movement of England. Necessity is the mother of invention, and what is still more important, of thought and action. The English working-man who can scarcely read and still less write, nevertheless knows very well where his own interest and that of the nation lies. He knows, too, what the especial interest of the bourgeoisie is, and what he has to expect of that bourgeoisie. If he cannot write he can speak, and speak in public; if he has no arithmetical skill, he can, nevertheless, reckon with the Political Economists enough to see through a Corn-Law-repealing bourgeoisie, and to get the better of him in argument; if celestial matters remain very mixed for him in spite of all the effort of the preachers, he sees all the more clearly into terrestrial, political,
and social questions. We shall have occasion to refer again to this point; and pass now to the moral characteristics of our workers.

It is sufficiently clear that the instruction in morals can have no better effect than the religious teaching, with which in all English schools it is mixed up. The simple principles which, for plain human beings, regulate the relations of man to man, brought into the direct confusion by our social state, our war of each against all, necessarily remain confused and foreign to the working-man when mixed with incomprehensible dogmas, and preached in the religious form of an arbitrary and dogmatic commandment. The schools contribute, according to the confession of all authorities, and especially of the Children's Employment Commission, almost nothing to the morality of the working-class. So short-sighted, so stupidly narrow-minded is the English bourgeoisie in its egotism, that it does not even take the trouble to impress upon the workers the morality of the day, which the bourgeoisie has patched together in its own interest for its own protection! Even this precautionary measure is too great an effort for the enfeebled and sluggish bourgeoisie. A time must come when it will repent its neglect, too late. But it has no right to complain that the workers know nothing of its system of morals, and do not act in accordance with it.

Thus are the workers cast out and ignored by the class in power, morally as well as physically and mentally. The only provision made for them is the law, which fastens upon them when they become obnoxious to the bourgeoisie. Like the dullest of the brutes, they are treated to but one form of education, the whip, in the shape of force, not convincing but intimidating. There is, therefore, no cause for surprise if the workers, treated as brutes, actually become such; or if they can maintain their consciousness of manhood only by cherishing the most glowing hatred, the most unbroken inward rebellion against the bourgeoisie in power. They are men so long only as they burn with wrath against the reigning class. They become brutes the moment they bend in patience under the yoke, and merely strive to make life endurable while abandoning the effort to break the yoke.

This, then, is all that the bourgeoisie has done for the education of the proletariat—and when we take into consideration all the circumstances in which this class lives, we shall not think the worse of it for the resentment which it cherishes against the ruling class. The moral training which is not given to the worker in school is not supplied by the other conditions of his life; that moral training, at least, which alone has worth in the eyes of the bourgeoisie; his whole position and environment involves the strongest temptation to immorality. He is poor, life offers him no charm, almost every enjoyment is denied him, the penalties of the law have no further terrors for him; why should he restrain his desires, why leave to the rich the enjoyment of his birthright, why not seize a part of it for himself? What inducement has the proletarian not to steal! It is all very pretty and very agreeable to the ear of the bourgeoisie to hear the "sacredness of property" asserted; but for him who has none, the sacredness of property dies out of himself. Money is the god of this world; the bourgeoisie takes the proletarian's money from him and so makes a practical atheist of him. No wonder, then, if the proletarian retains his atheism and no longer respects the sacredness and power of the earthly God. And when the poverty of the proletarian is intensified to the point of actual lack of the barest necessities of life, to want and hunger, the temptation to disregard all social order does but gain power. This the bourgeoisie for the most part recognizes. Symonds 1 observes that poverty exercises the same ruinous influence upon the mind which drunkenness exercises upon the body; and Dr. Alison explains to property-holding readers, with the greatest exactness, what the consequences of social oppression must be for the working-class. 2 Want leaves the working-man the choice between starving slowly, killing himself speedily, or taking what he needs where he finds it—in plain English, stealing. And there is no cause for surprise that most of them prefer stealing to starvation and suicide.

True, there are, within the working-class, numbers too moral to

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1 "Arts and Artisans."
steal even when reduced to the utmost extremity, and these starve or commit suicide. For suicide, formerly the enviable privilege of the upper classes, has become fashionable among the English workers, and numbers of the poor kill themselves to avoid the misery from which they see no other means of escape.

But far more demoralising than his poverty in its influence upon the English working-man is the insecurity of his position, the necessity of living upon wages from hand to mouth, that in short which makes a proletarian of him. The smaller peasants in Germany are usually poor, and often suffer want, but they are less at the mercy of accident, they have at least something secure.

The proletarian, who has nothing but his two hands, who consumes to-day what he earned yesterday, who is subject to every possible chance, and has not the slightest guarantee for being able to earn the barest necessities of life, whom every crisis, every whim of his employer may deprive of bread, this proletarian is placed in the most revolting, inhuman position conceivable for a human being. The slave is assured of a bare livelihood by the self-interest of his master, the serf has at least a scrap of land on which to live; each has at worst a guarantee for life itself. But the proletarian must depend upon himself alone, and is yet prevented from so applying his abilities as to be able to rely upon them. Everything that the proletarian can do to improve his position is but a drop in the ocean compared with the floods of varying chances to which he is exposed, over which he has not the slightest control. He is the passive subject of all possible combinations of circumstances, and must count himself fortunate when he has saved his life even for a short time; and his character and way of living are naturally shaped by these conditions. Either he seeks to keep his head above water in this whirlpool, to rescue his manhood, and this he can do solely in rebellion against the class which plundered him so mercilessly and then abandoning him to his fate, which strives to hold him in this position so demoralising to a human being; or he gives up the struggle against his fate as hopeless, and strives to profit, so far as he can, by the most favourable moment. To save is unsatisfying, for at the utmost he cannot save more than suffices to sustain life for a short time, while if he falls out of work, it is for no brief period. To accumulate lasting property for himself is impossible; and if it were not, he would only cease to be a working-man and another would take his place. What better thing can he do, then, when he gets high wages, than live well upon them? The English bourgeoisie is violently scandalised at the extravagant living of the workers when wages are high; yet it is not only very natural but very sensible of them to enjoy life when they can, instead of laying up treasures which are of no lasting use to them, and which in the end moth and rust (i.e., the bourgeoisie) get possession of. Yet such a life is demoralising beyond all others. What Carlyle says of the cotton spinners is true of all English industrial workers: 1

"Their trade, now in plethoric prosperity, anon extinguished into insolvency and 'short time,' is of the nature of gambling; they live by it like gamblers, now in luxurious superfluity, now in starvation. Black, mutinous discontent devours them; simply the miserablest feeling that can inhabit the heart of man. English commerce, with its world-wide, convulsive fluctuations, with its insensurable Proteus Steam demon, makes all paths uncertain for them, all life a bewildermont; society, steadiness, peaceable continuance, the first blessings of man are not theirs.—This world is for them no house, but a dingy prison-house, of reckless unchastisement, rebellion, rancour, indignation against themselves and against all men. Is it a green, flowery world, with azure everlasting sky stretched over it, the work and government of a God; or a murky simmering Tophet, of copperas fumes, cotton fus, gin riot, wrath and toil, created by a Demon, governed by a Demon? 2"

And elsewhere: 3

"Injustice, infidelity to truth and fact and Nature's order, being properly the one evil under the sun, and the feeling of injustice the one intolerable pain under the sun, our grand question as to the condition of these working-men would be: Is it just? And, first of all, what belief have they themselves formed about the

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1 "Chartism," p. 54, et seq.
2 Ibid., p. 40.
justice of it. The words they promulgate are notable by way of answer; their actions are still more notable. Revolt, sullen, revengeful humour of revolt against the upper classes, decreasing respect for what their temporal superiors command, decreasing faith for what their spiritual superiors teach, is more and more the universal spirit of the lower classes. Such spirit may be blamed, may be vindicated, but all men must recognise it as existent there, all may know that it is mournful, that unless altered it will be fatal."

Carlyle is perfectly right as to the facts and wrong only in ensuring the wild rage of the workers against the higher classes. This rage, this passion, is rather the proof that the workers feel the inhumanity of their position, that they refuse to be degraded to the level of brutes, and that they will one day free themselves from servitude to the bourgeoisie. This may be seen in the case of those who do not share this wrath; they either bow humbly before the fate that overtakes them, live a respectful private life as well as they can, do not concern themselves as to the course of public affairs, help the bourgeoisie to forge the chains of the workers yet more securely, and stand upon the plains of intellectual nullity that prevailed before the industrial period began; or they are tossed about by fate, lose their moral hold upon themselves as they have already lost their economic hold, live along from day to day, drink and fall into licentiousness; and in both cases they are brutes. The last-named class contributes chiefly to the "rapid increase of vice," at which the bourgeoisie is so horrified after itself setting in motion the causes which give rise to it.

Another source of demoralisation among the workers is their being condemned to work. As voluntary, productive activity is the highest enjoyment known to us, so is compulsory toil the most cruel, degrading punishment. Nothing is more terrible than being constrained to do some one thing every day from morning until night against one's will. And the more a man the worker feels himself, the more hateful must his work be to him, because he feels the constraint, the aimlessness of it for himself. Why does he work? For love of work! From a natural impulse?

Not at all! He works for money, for a thing which has nothing whatsoever to do with the work itself; and he works so long, moreover, and in such unbroken monotony, that this alone must make his work a torture in the first weeks if he has the least human feeling left. The division of labour has multiplied the brutalising influences of forced work. In most branches the worker's activity is reduced to some paltry, purely mechanical manipulation, repeated minute after minute, unchanged year after year. How much human feeling, what abilities can a man retain in his thirtieth year, who has made needle points or filed toothed wheels twelve hours every day from his early childhood, living all the time under the conditions forced upon the English proletarian? It is still the same thing since the introduction of steam. The worker's activity is made easy, muscular effort is saved, but the work itself becomes meaningless and monotonous to the last degree. It offers no field for mental activity, and claims just enough of his attention to keep him from thinking of anything else. And a sentence to each work, to work which takes his whole time for itself, leaving him scarcely time to eat and sleep, none for physical exercise in the open air, or the enjoyment of Nature, much less for mental activity, how can such a sentence help degrading a human being to the level of a brute? Once more the worker must choose, must either surrender himself to his fate, become a "good" workman, heed "faithfully" the interest of the bourgeoisie, in which case he most certainly becomes a brute, or else he must rebel, fight for his manhood to the last, and this he can only do in the fight against the bourgeoisie.

And when all these conditions have engendered vast demoralisation among the workers, a new influence is added to the old, to spread this degradation more widely and carry it to the extremest point. This influence is the centralisation of the population. The writers of the English bourgeoisie are crying murder at the demoralising tendency of the great cities, like perverted Jeremiahs, 2 Shall I call bourgeois witnesses to bear testimony from me here, too? I select one only, whom every one may read, namely, Adam Smith. "Wealth of Nations" (McCulloch's four volume edition), vol. iii., book 6, chap. 8, p. 297.
they sing dirges, not over the destruction, but the growth of the cities. Sheriff Alison attributes almost everything, and Dr. Vaughan, author of The Age of Great Cities, still more to this influence. And this is natural, for the property class has too direct an interest in the other conditions which tend to destroy the worker body and soul. If they should admit that "poverty, insecurity, overwork, forced work, are the chief ruinous influences," they would have to draw the conclusion, "then let us give the poor property, guarantee their subsistence, make laws against overwork," and this the bourgeoisie dare not formulate. But the great cities have grown up so spontaneously, the population has moved into them so wholly of its own motion, and the influence that manufacture and the middle-class which profits from it alone have created the cities is so remote, that it is extremely convenient for the ruling class to ascribe all the evil to this apparently unavoidable source; whereas the great cities really only secure a more rapid and certain development for evils already existing in the germ. Alison is humane enough to admit this; he is no thoroughbred Liberal manufacturer, but only a half-developed Tory bourgeois, and he has, therefore, an open eye, now and then, where the full-fledged bourgeois is still stone blind. Let us hear him: 1

"It is in the great cities that vice has spread her temptations, and pleasure her seductions, and folly her allurements; that guilt is encouraged by the hope of impunity, and idleness fostered by the frequency of example. It is to these great marts of human corruption that the base and the profligate resort from the simplicity of country life; it is here that they find victims where-on to practise their iniquity, and gains to reward the dangers that attend them. Virtue is here depressed from the obscurity in which it is involved. Guilt is matured from the difficulty of its detection; licentiousness is rewarded by the immediate enjoyment which it promises. If any person will walk through St. Giles's, the crowded alleys of Dublin, or the poorer quarters of Glasgow by night, he will meet with ample proof of these observations; he will no longer wonder at the disorderly habits and profligate enjoyments of the lower orders; his astonishment will be, not that


there is so much, but that there is so little crime in the world. The great cause of human corruption in these crowded situations is the contagious nature of bad example and the extreme difficulty of avoiding the seductions of vice when they are brought into close and daily proximity with the younger part of the people. Whatever we may think of the strength of virtue, experience proves that the higher orders are indebted for their exemption from atrocious crime or disorderly habits chiefly to their fortunate removal from the scene of temptation; and that where they are exposed to the seductions which assail their inferiors, they are noways behind them in yielding to their influence. It is the peculiar misfortune of the poor in great cities that they cannot fly from these irresistible temptations, but that, turn where they will, they are met by the alluring forms of vice, or the seductions of guilty enjoyment. It is the experienced impossibility of concealing the attractions of vice from the younger part of the poor in great cities which exposes them to so many causes of demoralisation. All this proceeds not from any unwonted or extraordinary depravity in the character of these victims of licentiousness, but from the almost irresistible nature of the temptations to which the poor are exposed. The rich, who cease their conduct, would in all probability yield as rapidly as they have done to the influence of similar causes. There is a certain degree of misery, a certain proximity to sin, which virtue is rarely able to withstand, and which the young, in particular, are generally unable to resist. The progress of vice in such circumstances is almost as certain and often nearly as rapid as that of physical contagion."

And elsewhere:

"When the higher orders for their own profit have drawn the labouring-classes in great numbers into a small space, the contagion of guilt becomes rapid and unavoidable. The lower orders, situated as they are in so far as regards moral or religious instruction, are frequently hardly more to be blamed for yielding to the temptations which surround them than for falling victims to the typhus fever."

Enough! The half-bourgeois Alison betrays to us, however narrow his manner of expressing himself, the evil effect of the great cities upon the moral development of the workers. Another, a bourgeois pur sang, a man after the heart of the Anti-Corn Law
League, Dr. Andrew Ure,\(^1\) betrays the other side. He tells us that life in great cities facilitates cabals among the workers and confers power on the Plebs. If here the workers are not educated (i.e., to obedience to the bourgeoisie), they may view matters one-sidedly, from the standpoint of a sinister selfishness, and may readily permit themselves to be hoodwinked by sly demagogues; nay, they might even be capable of viewing their greatest benefactors, the frugal and enterprising capitalists, with a jealous and hostile eye. Here proper training alone can avail, or national bankruptcy and other horrors must follow, since a revolution of the workers could hardly fail to occur. And our bourgeoisie is perfectly justified in his fears. If the centralisation of population stimulates and develops the property-holding class, it forces the development of the workers yet more rapidly. The workers begin to feel as a class, as a whole; they begin to perceive that, though feeble as individuals, they form a power united; their separation from the bourgeoisie, the development of views peculiar to the workers and corresponding to their position in life, is fostered, the consciousness of oppression awakens, and the workers attain social and political importance. The great cities are the birthplaces of labour movements; in them the workers first began to reflect upon their own condition, and to struggle against it; in them the opposition between proletariat and bourgeoisie first made itself manifest; from them proceeded the Trades-Unions, Chartism, and Socialism. The great cities have transformed the disease of the social body, which appears in chronic form in the country, into an acute one, and so made manifest its real nature and the means of curing it. Without the great cities and their forcing influence upon the popular intelligence, the working-class would be far less advanced than it is. Moreover, they have destroyed the last remnant of the patriarchal relation between working-men and employers, a result to which manufacture on a large scale has contributed by multiplying the employés dependent upon a single employer. The bourgeoisie deplores all this, it is true, and has good reason to do

\(^1\) "Philosophy of Manufactures," London, 1835, p. 406, et seq. We shall have occasion to refer further to this reputable work.

so; for, under the old conditions, the bourgeoisie was comparatively secure against a revolt on the part of his hands. He could tyrannise over them and plunder them to his heart's content, and yet receive obedience, gratitude, and assent from these stupid people by bestowing a trifle of patronising friendliness which cost him nothing, and perhaps some paltry present, all apparently out of pure, self-sacrificing, uncalled-for goodness of heart, but really not one-tenth part of his duty. As an individual bourgeois, placed under conditions which he had not himself created, he might do his duty at least in part; but, as a member of the ruling class, which, by the mere fact of its ruling, is responsible for the condition of the whole nation, he did nothing of what his position involved. On the contrary, he plundered the whole nation for his own individual advantage. In the patriarchal relation that hypocritically concealed the slavery of the worker, the latter must have remained an intellectual zero, totally ignorant of his own interest, a mere private individual. Only when estranged from his employer, when convinced that the sole bond between employer and employé is the bond of pecuniary profit, when the sentimental bond between them, which stood not the slightest test, had wholly fallen away, then only did the worker begin to recognise his own interests and develop independently; then only did he cease to be the slave of the bourgeoisie in his thoughts, feelings, and the expression of his will. And to this end manufacture on a grand scale and in great cities has most largely contributed.

Another influence of great moment in forming the character of the English workers is the Irish immigration already referred to. On the one hand it has, as we have seen, degraded the English workers, removed them from civilisation, and aggravated the hardship of their lot; but, on the other hand, it has thereby deepened the chasm between workers and bourgeoisie, and hastened the approaching crisis. For the course of the social disease from which England is suffering is the same as the course of a physical disease; it develops, according to certain laws, has its own crisis, the last and most violent of which determines the fate of the patient. And as the English nation cannot succumb under the final crises,
but must go forth from it, born again, rejuvenated, we can but rejoice over everything which accelerates the course of the disease. And to this the Irish immigration further contributes by reason of the passionate, mercurial Irish temperament, which it imports into England and into the English working-class. The Irish and English are to each other much as the French and the Germans; and the mixing of the more facile, excitable, fiery Irish temperament with the stable, reasoning, persevering English must, in the long run, be productive only of good for both. The rough egotism of the English bourgeoisie would have kept its hold upon the working-class much more firmly if the Irish nature, generous to a fault, and ruled primarily by sentiment, had not intervened, and softened the cold, rational English character in part by a mixture of the races, and in part by the ordinary contact of life.

In view of all this, it is not surprising that the working-class has gradually become a race wholly apart from the English bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie has more in common with every other nation of the earth than with the workers in whose midst it lives. The workers speak other dialects, have other thoughts and ideals, other customs and moral principles, a different religion and other politics than those of the bourgeoisie. Thus they are two radically dissimilar nations, as unlike as difference of race could make them, of whom we on the Continent have known but one, the bourgeoisie. Yet it is precisely the other, the people, the proletariat, which is by far the more important for the future of England.

Of the public character of the English working-man, as it finds expression in associations and political principles, we shall have occasion to speak later; let us here consider the results of the influences cited above, as they affect the private character of the worker. The workman is far more humane in ordinary life than the bourgeoisie. I have already mentioned the fact that the beggars are accustomed to turn almost exclusively to the workers, and that, in general, more is done by the workers than by the bourgeoisie for the maintenance of the poor. This fact, which any one may prove for himself any day, is confirmed, among others, by Dr. Parkinson, Canon of Manchester, who says: 1

"The poor give one another more than the rich give the poor. I can confirm my statement by the testimony of one of our oldest, most skilful, most observant, and humane physicians, Dr. Bardsley, who has often declared that the total sum which the poor yearly bestow upon one another surpasses that which the rich contribute in the same time."

In other ways, too, the humanity of the workers is constantly manifesting itself pleasantly. They have experienced hard times themselves and therefore feel for those in trouble, whereas they are more approachable, friendlier, and less greedy for money, though they need it far more, than the property-holding class. For them money is worth only what it will buy, whereas for the bourgeoisie it has an especial inherent value, the value of a god, and makes the bourgeoisie the mean, low money-grabber that he is. The working-man who knows nothing of this feeling of reverence for money is therefore less grasping than the bourgeoisie, whose whole activity is for the purpose of gain, who sees in the accumulations of his money-bags the end and aim of life. Hence the workman is much less prejudiced, has a clearer eye for facts as they are than the bourgeoisie, and does not look at everything through the spectacles of personal selfishness. His faulty education saves him from religious prepossessions, he does not understand religious questions, does not trouble himself about them, knows nothing of the fanaticism that holds the bourgeoisie bound; and if he chance to have any religion, he has it only in name, not even in theory. Practically he lives for this world, and strives to make himself at home in it. All the writers of the bourgeoisie are unanimous on this point, that the workers are not religious, and do not attend church. From the general statement are to be excepted the Irish, a few elderly people, and the half-bourgeoisie, the overlookers, foremen, and the like. But among

the masses there prevails almost universally a total indifference to religion, or at the utmost, some trace of Deism too undeveloped to amount to more than mere words, or a vague dread of the words infidel, atheist, etc. The clergy of all sects is in very bad odour with the working-men, though the loss of its influence is recent. At present, however, the mere cry: “He’s a parson!” is often enough to drive one of the clergy from the platform of a public meeting. And like the rest of the conditions under which he lives, his want of religious and other culture contributes to keep the working-man more unconstrained, freer from inherited stable tenets and cut-and-dried opinions, than the bourgeois who is saturated with the class prejudices poured into him from his earliest youth. There is nothing to be done with the bourgeois; he is essentially conservative in however liberal a guise, his interest is bound up with that of the property-holding class, he is dead to all active movement; he is losing his position in the forefront of England’s historical development. The workers are taking his place, in rightful claim first, then in fact.

All this, together with the correspondent public action of the workers, with which we shall deal later, forms the favourable side of the character of this class; the unfavourable one may be quite as briefly summed up, and follows quite as naturally out of the given causes. Drunkenness, sexual irregularities, brutality, and disregard for the rights of property are the chief points with which the bourgeois charges them. That they drink heavily is to be expected. Sheriff Alison asserts that in Glasgow some thirty thousand working-men get drunk every Saturday night, and the estimate is certainly not exaggerated; and that in that city in 1830, one house in twelve, and in 1840, one house in ten, was a public-house; that in Scotland, in 1823, excise was paid upon 2,300,000 gallons; in 1837, upon 6,620,000 gallons; in England, in 1823, upon 1,976,000 gallons, and in 1837, upon 7,876,000 gallons of spirits. The Beer Act of 1830, which facilitated the opening of beerhouses (jerry shops), whose keepers are licensed to sell beer to be drunk on the premises, facilitated the spread of intemperance by bringing a beerhouse, so to say, to everybody’s door.

In nearly every street there are several such beerhouses, and among two or three neighbouring houses in the country one is sure to be a jerry shop. Besides these, there are hush-shops in multitudes, i.e., secret drinking-places which are not licensed, and quite as many secret distilleries which produce great quantities of spirits in retired spots, rarely visited by the police, in the great cities. Gaskell estimates these secret distilleries in Manchester alone at more than a hundred, and their product at 156,000 gallons at the least. In Manchester there are, besides, more than a thousand public-houses selling all sorts of alcoholic drinks, or quite as many in proportion to the number of inhabitants as in Glasgow. In all other great towns, the state of things is the same. And when one considers, apart from the usual consequences of intemperance, that men and women, even children, often mothers with babies in their arms, come into contact in these places with the most degraded victims of the bourgeois régime, with thieves, swindlers, and prostitutes; when one reflects that many a mother gives the baby on her arm gin to drink, the demoralising effects of frequenting such places cannot be denied.

On Saturday evenings, especially when wages are paid and work stops somewhat earlier than usual, when the whole working-class pours from its own poor quarters into the main thoroughfares, intemperance may be seen in all its brutality. I have rarely come out of Manchester on such an evening without meeting numbers of people staggering and seeing others lying in the gutter. On Sunday evening the same scene is usually repeated, only less noisily. And when their money is spent, the drunken go to the nearest pawnshop, of which there are plenty in every city—over sixty in Manchester, and ten or twelve in a single street of Salford, Chapel Street—and pawn whatever they possess. Furniture, Sunday clothes where such exist, kitchen utensils in masses are fetched from the pawnbrokers on Saturday night only to wander back, almost without full, before the next Wednesday, until at last some accident makes the final redemption impossible, and one article after another falls into the clutches of the usurer, or until he refuses to give a single farthing more upon
the battered, used-up pledge. When one has seen the extent of intemperance among the workers in England, one readily believes Lord Ashley’s statement that this class annually expends something like twenty-five million pounds sterling upon intoxicating liquor; and the deterioration in external conditions, the frightful shattering of mental and physical health, the ruin of all domestic relations which follow may readily be imagined. True, the temperance societies have done much, but what are a few thousand teetotallers among the millions of workers! When Father Matthew, the Irish apostle of temperance, passes through the English cities, from thirty to sixty thousand workers take the pledge; but most of them break it again within a month. If one counts up the immense numbers who have taken the pledge in the last three or four years in Manchester, the total is greater than the whole population of the town—and still it is by no means evident that intemperance is diminishing.

Next to intemperance in the enjoyment of intoxicating liquors, one of the principal faults of English working-men is sexual licence. But this, too, follows with relentless logic, with inevitable necessity out of the position of a class left to itself, with no means of making a fitting use of its freedom. The bourgeoisie has left the working-class only these two pleasures, while imposing upon it a multitude of labours and hardships, and the consequence is that the working-men, in order to get something from life, concentrate their whole energy upon these two enjoyments, carry them to excess, surrender to them in the most unbridled manner. When people are placed under conditions which appeal to the brute only, what remains to them but to rebel or to succumb to utter brutality? And when, moreover, the bourgeoisie does its full share in maintaining prostitution—and how many of the 40,000 prostitutes who fill the streets of London every evening live upon the virtuous bourgeoisie! How many of them owe it to the seduction of a bourgeoisie, that they must offer their bodies to the passers-by in order to live!—surely it has least of all a right to reproach the workers with their sexual brutality.

The failings of the workers in general may be traced to an unbridled thirst for pleasure, to want of providence, and of flexibility in fitting into the social order, to the general inability to sacrifice the pleasure of the moment to a remoter advantage. But is that to be wondered at? When a class can purchase few and only the most sensual pleasures by its wearying toil, must it not give itself over blindly and madly to those pleasures? A class about whose education no one troubles himself, which is a playback to a thousand chances, knows no security in life—what incentives has such a class to providence, to “respectability,” to sacrifice the pleasure of the moment for a remoter enjoyment, most uncertain precisely by reason of the perpetually varying, shifting conditions under which the proletariat lives? A class which bears all the disadvantages of the social order without enjoying its advantages, one to which the social system appears in purely hostile aspects—who can demand that such a class respect this social order? Verify that is asking much! But the working-man cannot escape the present arrangement of society so long as it exists, and when the individual worker resists it, the greatest injury falls upon himself.

Thus the social order makes family life almost impossible for the worker. In a comfortless, filthy house, hardly good enough for mere nightly shelter, ill-furnished, often neither rain-tight nor warm, a foul atmosphere filling rooms overcrowded with human beings, no domestic comfort is possible. The husband works the whole day through, perhaps the wife also and the elder children, all in different places; they meet night and morning only, all under perpetual temptation to drink; what family life is possible under such conditions? Yet the working-man cannot escape from the family, must live in the family, and the consequence is a perpetual succession of family troubles, domestic quarrels, most demoralising for parents and children alike. Neglect of all domestic duties, neglect of the children, especially, is only too common among the English working-people, and only too vigorously fostered by the existing institutions of society. And children growing up in this savage way, amidst these demoralising influences, are expected to turn out goody-goody and moral in the end!
Verily the requirements are naive, which the self-satisfied bourgeoisie makes upon the working-man!

The contempt for the existing social order is most conspicuous in its extreme form—that of offences against the law. If the influences demoralizing to the working-man act more powerfully, more concentrated than usual, he becomes an offender as certainly as water abandons the fluid for the vaporous state at 80 degrees, Réaumur. Under the brutal and brutalising treatment of the bourgeoisie, the working-man becomes precisely as much a thing without volition as water, and is subject to the laws of nature with precisely the same necessity; at a certain point all freedom ceases. Hence with the extension of the proletarian crime has increased in England, and the British nation has become the most criminal in the world. From the annual criminal tables of the Home Secretary, it is evident that the increase of crime in England has proceeded with incomprehensible rapidity. The numbers of arrests for criminal offences reached in the years:

1805, 4,605; 1810, 8,146; 1815, 7,898; 1820, 11,710; 1825, 14,437; 1830, 15,107; 1835, 20,731; 1840, 27,187; 1841, 27,780; 1842, 31,390 in England and Wales alone. That is to say, they increased sevenfold in thirty-seven years. Of these arrests, in 1842, 4,497 were made in Lancashire alone, or more than 14 per cent of the whole; and 4,094 in Middlesex, including London, or more than 13 per cent. So that two districts which include great cities with large proletarian populations, produced one-fourth of the total amount of crime, though their population is far from forming one-fourth of the whole. Moreover, the criminal tables prove directly that nearly all crime arises within the proletariat; for, in 1842, taking the average, out of 100 criminals, 22.35 could neither read nor write; 38.32 read and wrote imperfectly; 6.77 could read and write well; 0.22 had enjoyed a higher education, while the degree of education of 2.04 could not be ascertained. In Scotland, crime has increased yet more rapidly. There were but 89 arrests for criminal offences in 1819, and as early as 1837 the number had risen to 3,176, and in 1842 to 4,189. In Lanarkshire, where Sheriff Alison himself made out the official report, population has doubled once in thirty years, and crime once in five and a half, or six times more rapidly than the population. The offences, as in all civilized countries, are, in the great majority of cases, against property, and have, therefore, arisen from want in some form; for what a man has, he does not steal. The proportion of offences against property to the population, which in the Netherlands is as 1:7,140, and in France, as 1:1,804, was in England, when Gaskell wrote, as 1:799. The proportion of offences against persons to the population is, in the Netherlands, 1:28,904; in France, 1:17,573; in England, 1:23,895; that of crimes in general to the population in the agricultural districts, as 1:1,043; in the manufacturing districts as 1:840.1 In the whole of England to-day the proportion is 1:360;² though it is scarcely ten years since Gaskell’s book appeared!

These facts are certainly more than sufficient to bring any one, even a bourgeoisie, to pause and reflect upon the consequences of such a state of things. If demoralization and crime multiply twenty years longer in this proportion (and if English manufacture in these twenty years should be less prosperous than heretofore, the progressive multiplication of crime can only continue the more rapidly), what will the result be? Society is already in a state of visible dissolution; it is impossible to pick up a newspaper without seeing the most striking evidence of the giving way of all social ties. I look at random into a heap of English journals lying before me; there is the Manchester Guardian for October 30, 1844, which reports for three days. It no longer takes the trouble to give exact details as to Manchester, and merely relates the most interesting cases: that the workers in a mill have struck for higher wages without giving notice, and been condemned by a Justice of the Peace to resume work; that in Salford a couple of boys had been caught stealing, and a bankrupt tradesman tried to cheat his creditors. From the neighbouring towns the reports are more detailed: in Ashton, two thieves, one

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2 The total of population, about fifteen millions, divided by the number of convicted criminals (22,733).
burglary, one suicide; in Bury, one theft; in Bolton, two thefts, one revenue fraud; in Leigh, one theft; in Oldham, one strike for wages, one theft, one fight between Irish women, one non-Union hatter assaulted by Union men, one mother beaten by her son, one attack upon the police, one robbery of a church; in Stockport, discontent of working-men with wages, one theft, one fraud, one fight, one wife beaten by her husband; in Warrington, one theft, one fight; in Wigan, one theft, and one robbery of a church. The reports of the London papers are much worse; frauds, thefts, assaults, family quarrels crowd one another. A Times of September 12, 1844, falls into my hand, which gives a report of a single day, including a theft, an attack upon the police, a sentence upon a father requiring him to support his illegitimate son, the abandonment of a child by its parents, and the poisoning of a man by his wife. Similar reports are to be found in all the English papers. In this country, social war is under full headway, every one stands for himself, and fights for himself against all comers, and whether or not he shall injure all the others who are his declared foes, depends upon a cynical calculation as to what is most advantageous for himself. It no longer occurs to any one to come to a peaceful understanding with his fellow-man; all differences are settled by threats, violence, or in a law-court. In short, every one sees in his neighbour an enemy to be got out of the way, or, at best, a tool to be used for his own advantage. And this war grows from year to year, as the criminal tables shew, more violent, passionate, irreconcilable. The enemies are dividing gradually into two great camps—the bourgeoisie on the one hand, the workers on the other. This war of each against all, of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, need cause us no surprise, for it is only the logical sequel of the principle involved in free competition. But it may very well surprise us that the bourgeoisie remains so quiet and composed in the face of the rapidly gathering storm-clouds, that it can read all these things daily in the papers without, we will not say indignation at such a social condition, but fear of its consequences, of a universal outburst of that which manifests itself symptomatically from day to day in the form of crime. But then it is the bourgeoisie, and from its standpoint cannot even see the facts, much less perceive their consequences. One thing only is astounding, that class prejudice and preconceived opinions can hold a whole class of human beings in such perfect, I might almost say, such mad blindness. Meanwhile, the development of the nation goes its way whether the bourgeoisie has eyes for it or not, and will surprise the property-holding class one day with things not dreamed of in its philosophy.
SINGLE BRANCHES OF INDUSTRY.

FACTORY HANDS.

In dealing now with the more important branches of the English manufacturing proletariat, we shall begin, according to the principle already laid down, with the factory-workers, i.e., those who are comprised under the Factory Act. This law regulates the length of the working-day in mills in which wool, silk, cotton, and flax are spun or woven by means of water or steam-power, and embraces, therefore, the more important branches of English manufacture. The class employed by them is the most intelligent and energetic of all the English workers, and, therefore, the most restless and most hated by the bourgeoisie. It stands as a whole, and the cotton-workers pre-eminently stand, at the head of the labour movement, as their masters the manufacturers, especially those of Lancashire, take the lead of the bourgeoisie agitation.

We have already seen in the introduction how the population employed in working up the textile materials were first torn from their former way of life. It is, therefore, not surprising that the progress of mechanical invention in later years also affected precisely these workers most deeply and permanently. The history of cotton manufacture as related by Ure, 1 Baines, 2 and others is the story of improvements in every direction, most of which have become domesticated in the other branches of industry as well. Hand-work is superseded by machine-work almost universally, nearly all manipulations are conducted by the aid of steam or water, and every year is bringing further improvements.

In a well-ordered state of society, such improvements could only be a source of rejoicing; in a war of all against all, individuals seize the benefit for themselves, and so deprive the majority of the means of subsistence. Every improvement in machinery throws workers out of employment, and the greater the advance, the more numerous the unemployed; each great improvement produces, therefore, upon a number of workers the effect of a commercial crisis, creates want, wretchedness, and crime. Take a few examples. The very first invention, the jenny, worked by one man, produced at least sixfold what the spinning-wheel had yielded in the same time; thus every new jenny threw five spinners out of employment. The thrrostle, which, in turn, produced much more than the jenny, and like it, was worked by one man, threw still more people out of employment. The mule, which required yet fewer hands in proportion to the product, had the same effect, and every improvement in the mule, every multiplication of its spindles, diminished still further the number of workers employed. But this increase of the number of spindles in the mule is so great that whole armies of workers have been thrown out of employment by it. For, whereas one spinner, with a couple of children for piecers, formerly set six hundred spindles in motion, he could now manage fourteen hundred to two thousand spindles upon two mules, so that two adult spinners and a part of the piecers whom they employed were thrown out. And since self-acting mules have been introduced into a very large number of spinning-mills, the spinners' work is wholly performed by the machine. There lies before me a book from the pen of James Leach, 3 one of the recognised leaders of the Chartists in Manchester. The author has worked for years in various branches of industry, in mills and coal mines, and is known to me personally as an honest, trustworthy, and capable man. In consequence of his political position, he had at command extensive detailed information as to the different factories, collected by the workers themselves, and he publishes tables from which it is clear that in 1841, in 35 factories, 1,060 fewer male spinners were employed than in 1829, though the number of spindles in these 35 factories had increased by 99,239. He cites five factories

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1 "The Cotton Manufacture of Great Britain," by Dr. A. Ure, 1836.
3 "Stubborn Facts from the Factories by a Manchester Operative." Published and dedicated to the working-classes, by Wm. Haslehurst, M.P., London, Olliver, 1844, p. 20, et seq.
in which no spinners whatever are employed, self-workers only being used. While the number of spindles increased by 10 per cent., the number of spinners diminished more than 60 per cent. And Leach adds that since 1841, so many improvements have been introduced by double-decking and other means, that in some of the factories named, half the operatives have been discharged. In one factory alone, where eighty spinners were employed a short time ago, there are now but twenty left; the others having been discharged or set at children's work for children's wages. Of Stockport Leach tells a similar story, that in 1835, 800 spinners were employed, and in 1840 but 140, though the manufacture of Stockport has greatly increased during the last eight or nine years. Similar improvements have now been made in carding frames, by which one-half the operatives have been thrown out of employment. In one factory improved frames have been set up, which have thrown four hands out of eight out of work, besides which the employer reduced the wages of the four retained from eight shillings to seven. The same process has gone on in the weaving industry; the power-loom has taken possession of one branch of hand-weaving after another, and since it produces much more than the hand-loom, while one weaver can work two looms, it has superseded a multitude of working people. And in all sorts of manufacture, in flax and wool-spinning, in silk-twisting, the case is the same. The power-loom, too, is beginning to appropriate one branch after another of wool and linen-weaving; in Rochdale alone, there are more power than hand-loomsmen in flannel and other wool-weaving branches. The bourgeoisie usually replies to this, that improvements in machinery, by decreasing the cost of production, supply finished goods at lower prices, and that these reduced prices cause such an increase in consumption that the unemployed operatives soon find full employment in newly-founded factories. The bourgeoisie is so far correct that under certain conditions favourable for the general development of manufacture, every reduction in price of goods in which the raw material is cheap, greatly increases consumption, and gives rise to the building of new factories; but every further word of the assertion is a lie. The bourgeoisie ignores the fact that it takes years for these results of the decrease in price to follow and for new factories to be built; it is silent upon the point that every improvement in machinery throws the real work, the expenditure of force, more and more upon the machine, and so transforms the work of full-grown men into mere supervision, which a feeble woman or even a child can do quite as well, and does for half or two-thirds wages; that, therefore, grown men are constantly more and more supplanted and not re-employed by the increase in manufacture; it conceals the fact that whole branches of industry fall away, or are so changed that they must be learned afresh; and it takes good care not to confess what it usually harps upon, whenever the question of forbidding the work of children is broached, that factory-work must be learned in earliest youth in order to be learned properly. It does not mention the fact that the process of improvement goes steadily on, and that as soon as the operative has succeeded in making himself at home in a new branch, if he actually does succeed in so doing, this, too, is taken from him, and with it the last remnant of security which remained to him for winning his bread. But the bourgeoisie gets the benefit of the improvements in machinery; it has a capital opportunity for piling up money during the first years while many old machines are still in use, and the improvement not yet universally introduced; and it would be too much to ask that it should have an open eye for the disadvantages inseparable from these improvements.

The fact that improved machinery reduces wages has also been as violently disputed by the bourgeoisie, as it is constantly reiterated by the working-men. The bourgeoisie insists that although the price of piece-work has been reduced, yet the total of wages for the week's work has rather risen than fallen, and the condition of the operatives rather improved than deteriorated. It is hard to get to the bottom of the matter, for the operatives usually dwell upon the price of piece-work. But it is certain that the weekly wage, also, has, in many branches of work, been reduced by the improvement of machinery. The so-called fine
spiners (who spin fine mule yarn), for instance, do receive high wages, thirty to forty shillings a week, because they have a powerful association for keeping wages up, and their craft requires long training; but the coarse spinners who have to compete against self-operators (which are not as yet adapted for fine spinning), and whose association was broken down by the introduction of these machines, receive very low wages. A mule spinner told me that he does not earn more than fourteen shillings a week, and his statement agrees with that of Leach, that in various factories the coarse spinners earn less than sixteen shillings and sixpence a week, and that a spinner, who years ago earned thirty shillings, can now hardly scrape up twelve and a half, and had not earned more on an average in the past year. The wages of women and children may perhaps have fallen less, but only because they were not high from the beginning. I know several women, widows with children, who have trouble enough to earn eight to nine shillings a week; and that they and their families cannot live decently upon that sum, every one must admit who knows the price of the barest necessaries of life in England. That wages in general have been reduced by the improvement of machinery is the unanimous testimony of the operatives. The bourgeois assertion that the condition of the working-class has been improved by machinery is most vigorously proclaimed a falsehood in every meeting of working-men in the factory districts. And even if it were true that the relative wage, the price of piece-work only, has fallen, while the absolute wage, the sum to be earned in the week, remained unchanged, what would follow? That the operatives have had quietly to listen while the manufacturers filled their purses from every improvement without giving the hands the smallest share in the gain. The bourgeois forgets, in fighting the working-man, the most ordinary principles of his own Political Economy. He who at other times swears by Malthus, cries out in his anxiety before the workers: "Where could the millions by which the population of England has increased find work, without the improvements in machinery?" 1 As though the bourgeois
did not know well enough that without machinery and the expansion of industry which it produced, these millions would never have been brought into the world and grown up! The service which machinery has rendered the workers is simply this: that it has brought home to their minds the necessity of a social reform by means of which machinery shall no longer work against but for them. Let the wise bourgeois ask the people who sweep the streets in Manchester and elsewhere (though even this is past now, since machines for the purpose have been invented and introduced), or sell salt, matches, oranges, and shoe-strings on the streets, or even beg, what they were formerly, and he will see how many will answer: "Mill-hands thrown out of work by machinery." The consequences of improvement in machinery under our present social conditions are, for the working-man, solely injurious, and often in the highest degree oppressive. Every new advance brings with it loss of employment, want, and suffering, and in a country like England where, without that, there is usually a "surplus population," to be discharged from work is the worst that can befall the operative. And what a dispiriting, unnerving influence this uncertainty of his position in life, consequent upon the unceasing progress of machinery, must exercise upon the worker, whose lot is precarious enough without it! To escape despair, there are but two ways open to him; either inward and outward revolt against the bourgeoisie or drunkenness and general demoralisation. And the English operatives are accustomed to take refuge in both. The history of the English proletariat relates hundreds of risings against machinery and the bourgeoisie; we have already spoken of the moral dissolution which, in itself, is only another form of despair.

1 L. Symonds, in "Arts and Artisans."
bear the hardship? The manufacturer will not throw out his old apparatus, nor will he sustain the loss upon it; out of the dead mechanism he can make nothing, so he fastens upon the living worker, the universal scapegoat of society. Of all the workers in competition with machinery, the most ill-used are the hand-loom cotton weavers. They receive the most trifling wages, and, with full work, are not in a position to earn more than ten shillings a week. One class of woven goods after another is annexed by the power-loom, and hand-weaving is the last refuge of workers thrown out of employment in other branches, so that the trade is always overcrowded. Hence it comes that, in average seasons, the hand-weaver counts himself fortunate if he can earn six or seven shillings a week, while to reach this sum he must sit at his loom fourteen to eighteen hours a day. Most woven goods require moreover a damp weaving-room, to keep the weft from snapping, and in part, for this reason, in part because of their poverty, which prevents them from paying for better dwellings, the work-rooms of these weavers are usually without wooden or paved floors. I have been in many dwellings of such weavers, in remote, vile courts and alleys, usually in cellars. Often half-a-dozen of these hand-loom weavers, several of them married, live together in a cottage with one or two work-rooms, and one large sleeping-room. Their food consists almost exclusively of potatoes, with perhaps oatmeal porridge, rarely milk, and scarcely ever meat. Great numbers of them are Irish or of Irish descent. And these poor hand-loom weavers, first to suffer from every crisis, and last to be relieved from it, must serve the bourgeoisie as a handle in meeting attacks upon the factory system. “See,” cries the bourgeoisie, triumphantly, “see how these poor creatures must starve, while the mill operatives are thriving, and then judge the factory system!” As though it were not precisely the factory system and the machinery belonging to it which had so shamefully crushed the hand-loom weavers, and as though the bourgeoisie did not know this quite as well as ourselves! But the bourgeoisie has interests at stake, and so a falsehood or two and a bit of hypocrisy won’t matter much.

1 See Dr. Ure in the “Philosophy of Manufacture.”

Let us examine somewhat more closely the fact that machinery more and more supersedes the work of men. The human labour, involved in both spinning and weaving, consists chiefly in piecing broken threads, as the machine does all the rest. This work requires no muscular strength, but only flexibility of finger. Men are, therefore, not only not needed for it, but actually, by reason of the greater muscular development of the hand, less fit for it than women and children, and are, therefore, naturally almost superseded by them. Hence, the more the use of the arms, the expenditure of strength, can be transferred to steam or water-power, the fewer men need be employed; and as women and children work more cheaply, and in these branches better than men, they take their places. In the spinning-mills women and girls are to be found in almost exclusive possession of the thread-rolls; among the mules one man, an adult spinner (with self-actions, he, too, becomes superfluous), and several piecers for tying the threads, usually children or women, sometimes young men of from eighteen to twenty years, here and there an old spinner 1 thrown out of other employment. At the power-looms women, from fifteen to twenty years, are chiefly employed, and a few men; these, however, rarely remain at this trade after their twenty-first year. Among the preparatory machinery, too, women alone are to be found, with here and there a man to clean and sharpen the carding-frames. Besides all these, the factories employ numbers of children—doffers—for mounting and taking down bobbins, and a few men as overlookers, a mechanic and an engineer for the steam-engines, carpenters, porters, etc.; but the actual work of the mills is done by women and children. This the manufacturers deny. They published last year elaborate tables to prove that machinery does not supersed adult male operatives. According to these tables, rather more than half of all the factory-workers employed, 1 Report of Factory Inspector, L. Horner, October, 1844: “The state of things in the matter of wages is greatly perverted in certain branches of cotton manufacture in Lancashire; here are hundreds of young men, between twenty and thirty, employed as piecers and otherwise, who do not get more than 3 or 9 shillings a week, while children under thirteen years, working under the same roof, earn 9 shillings, and young girls, from sixteen to twenty years, 10-12 shillings per week.”
vic., 52 per cent., were females and 48 per cent. males, and of
these operatives more than half were over eighteen years old. So
far, so good. But the manufacturers are very careful not to tell
us, how many of the adults were men and how many women.
And this is just the point. Besides this, they have evidently
counted the mechanics, engineers, carpenters, all the men em-
ployed in any way in the factories, perhaps even the clerks, and
still they have not the courage to tell the whole truth. These
publications teen generally with falsehoods, perversions, crooked
statements, with calculations of averages, that prove a great
deal for the uninitiated reader and nothing for the initiated,
and with suppressions of facts bearing on the most important
points; and they prove only the selfish blindness and want of up-
rightness of the manufacturers concerned. Let us take some
of the statements of a speech with which Lord Ashley introduced
the Ten Hours’ Bill, March 16th, 1814, into the House of Com-
mons. Here he gives some data as to the relations of sex
and age of the operatives, not yet refuted by the manufacturers,
whose statements, as quoted above, cover moreover only a part
of the manufacturing industry of England. Of 419,540 (factory
operatives of the British Empire in 1838, 192,887, or nearly half,
were under eighteen years of age, and 242,296 of the female sex
of whom 112,192 were less than eighteen years old. These re-
main, therefore, 80,695 male operatives under eighteen years, and
96,559 adult male operatives, or not one full quarter of the whole
number. In the cotton factories, 56 1/4 per cent.; in the woollen
mills, 69 1/2 per cent.; in the silk mills, 70 2/3 per cent.; in the
silk spinning mills, 70 1/2 per cent. of all operatives are of the female sex.
These numbers suffice to prove the crowding out of adult males.
But you have only to go into the nearest mill to see the fact con-
firm. Hence follows of necessity that inversion of the existing
social order which, being forced upon them, has the most ruinous
consequences for the workers. The employment of women at once
breaks up the family; for when the wife spends twelve or thirteen
hours every day in the mill, and the husband works the same
length of time there or elsewhere, what becomes of the children?

They grow up like wild weeds; they are put out to nurse for a
shilling or eighteenpence a week, and how they are treated may
be imagined. Hence the accidents to which little children fall
victims multiply in the factory districts to a terrible extent. The
lists of the Coroners of Manchester 1 showed for nine months: 69
deaths from burning, 58 from drowning, 23 from falling, 77 from
other causes, or a total of 225 2 deaths from accidents, while in
non-manufacturing Liverpool during twelve months there were
but 146 fatal accidents. The mining accidents are excluded in
both cases; and since the Coroner of Manchester has no authority
in Salford, the population of both places mentioned in the com-
parison is about the same. The Manchester Guardian reports one
or more deaths by burning in almost every number. That the
general mortality among young children must be increased by the
employment of the mothers is self-evident, and is placed beyond
all doubt by notorious facts. Women often return to the mill
three or four days after confinement, leaving the baby, of course;
in the dinner hour they must hurry home to feed the child and
eat something, and what sort of suckling that can be is also
evident. Lord Ashley repeats the testimony of several work-
 women: “M. H., twenty years old, has two children, the youngest a
baby, that is tended by the other, a little older. The mother goes
to the mill shortly after five o’clock in the morning, and comes
home at eight at night; all day the milk pours from her breasts,
so that her clothing drips with it.” “H. W. has three children,
goes away Monday morning at five o’clock, and comes back
Saturday evening; has so much to do for the children then that
she cannot get to bed before three o’clock in the morning; often
wet through to the skin, and obliged to work in that state.” She
said: “My breasts have given me the most frightful pain, and I
have been dripping wet with milk.” The use of narcotics to keep
the children still is fostered by this infamous system, and has
reached a great extent in the factory districts. Dr. Johns, Reg-

1Report of Factorys’ Inquiry Commission. Testimony of Dr. Hawkins, p. 3
2In 1845, among the accidents brought to the Infirmary in Manchester,
one hundred and eighty-nine were from burning.
there; I give the exact address for the purpose), written by him to Castler: 3

He relates how another working-man, being on tramp, came to St. Helens, in Lancashire, and there looked up an old friend. He found him in a miserable, damp cellar, scarcely furnished; and when my poor friend went in, there sat poor Jack near the fire, and what did he, think you! why he sat and mended his wife’s stockings with the bodkin; and as soon as he saw his old friend at the door-post, he tried to hide them. But Joe, that is my friend’s name, had seen it, and said: “Jack, what the devil are you doing? Where is the missus? Why, is that thy work?” and poor Jack was ashamed, and said: “No, I know this is not my work, but my poor missus is t’th’ factory; she has to leave at half-past five and works till eight at night, and then she is so knocked up that she cannot do aught when she gets home, so I have to do everything for her, that is for all I can, for I have no work, nor had any for more than three years, and I shall never have any more work while I live;” then he wept a big tear. Jack again said: “There is work enough for women folks and childer hereabouts, but none for men; thou mayest sooner find a hundred pound on the road than work for men—but I should never have believed that either thou or any one else would have seen me mending my wife’s stockings, for it is bad work. But she can hardly stand on her feet; I am afraid she will be laid up, and thon I don’t know what is to become of us, for it’s a good bit that she has been the man in the house and I the woman; it is bad work, Joe;” and he cried bitterly, and said, “It has not been always so.” “No,” said Joe; “but when thou hadn’t no work, how hast thou not shifted?” “I’ll tell thee, Joe, as well as I can, but it was bad enough; thou knowest when I got married I had work plenty, and thou knowest I was not lazy.” “No, that thou wert not.” “And we had a good furnished house, and Mary need not go to work. I could work for the two of us, but now the world is upside down. Mary has to work and I have to stop at home, mind the childer

1 Factory Hands. 145

sweep and wash, bake and mend; and, when the poor woman comes home at night, she is knocked up. Thou knowst, Joe, it's hard for one that was used different." "Yes, boy, it is hard." And then Jack began to cry again, and he wished he had never married, and that he had never been born; but he had never thought, when he wed Mary, that it would come to this. "I have often cried over it," said Jack. Now when Joe heard this, he told me that he had cursed and damned the factories, and the masters, and the Government, with all the curses that he had learned while he was in the factory from a child."

Can any one imagine a more insane state of things than that described in this letter? And yet this condition, which unsexes the man and takes from the woman all womanliness without being able to bestow upon the man true womanliness, or the woman true manliness—this condition which degrades, in the most shameful way, both sexes, and, through them, Humanity, is the last result of our much-praised civilization, the final achievement of all the efforts and struggles of hundreds of generations to improve their own situation and that of their posterity. We must either despair of mankind, and its aims and efforts, when we see all our labour and toil result in such a mockery, or we must admit that human society has hitherto sought salvation in a false direction; we must admit that so total a reversal of the position of the sexes can have come to pass only because the sexes have been placed in a false position from the beginning. If the reign of the wife over the husband, as inevitably brought about by the factory system, is inhuman, the pristine rule of the husband over the wife must have been inhuman too. If the wife can now base her supremacy upon the fact that she supplies the greater part, nay, the whole of the common possession, the necessary inference is that this community of possession is no true and rational one, since one member of the family boasts offensively of contributing the greater share. If the family of our present society is being thus dissolved, this dissolution merely shows that, at bottom, the binding ties of this family was not family affection, but private interest lurking under the cloak of a pretended community of possessions.

The same relation exists on the part of those children who support unemployed parents when they do not directly pay board as already referred to. Dr. Hawkins testified in the Factory's Inquiry Commission's Report that this relation is common enough, and in Manchester it is notorious. In this case the children are the masters in the house, as the wife was in the former case, and Lord Ashley gives an example of this in his speech: "A man berated his two daughters for going to the public house, and they answered that they were tired of being ordered about, saying, "Damn you, we have to keep you!" Determined to keep the proceeds of their work for themselves, they left the family dwelling, and abandoned their parents to their fate.

The unmarried women, who have grown up in mills, are no better off than the married ones. It is self-evident that a girl who has worked in a mill from her ninth year is in no position to understand domestic work, whence it follows that female operatives prove wholly inexperienced and unfit as housekeepers. They cannot knit or sew, cook or wash, are unacquainted with the most ordinary duties of a housekeeper, and when they have young children to take care of, have not the vaguest idea how to set about it. The Factory's Inquiry Commission's Report gives dozens of examples of this, and Dr. Hawkins, Commissioner for Lancashire, expresses his opinion as follows: "The girls marry early and recklessly; they have neither means, time, nor opportunity to learn the ordinary duties of household life. But if they had them all, they would find no time in Married life for the performance of these duties. The mother is more than twelve hours away from her child daily; the baby is cared for by a young girl or an old woman, to whom it is given to nurse. Besides this, the dwelling of the mill-hands is too often no home but a cell, which contains no cooking or washing utensils.

1 How numerous married women are in the factories is seen from information furnished by a manufacturer: In 412 factories in Lancashire, 10,723 of them were employed; of the husbands of these women, but 6,314 were also employed in the factories, 3,927 were otherwise employed, 821 were unemployed, and information was wanting as to 659; or two, if not three men for each factory, are supported by the work of their wives.

2 House of Commons, March 15th, 1844.

3 Factories' Inquiry Commission's Report, p. 4.
no sewing or mending materials, nothing which makes life agreeable and civilised, or the domestic hearth attractive. For these and other reasons, and especially for the sake of the better chances of life for the little children, I can but wish and hope that a time may come in which married women will be shut out of the factories.  

But that is the least of the evil. The moral consequences of the employment of women in factories are even worse. The collecting of persons of both sexes and all ages in a single workroom, the inevitable contact, the crowding into a small space of people, to whom neither mental nor moral education has been given, is not calculated for the favourable development of the female character. The manufacturer, if he pays any attention to the matter, can interfere only when something scandalous actually happens; the permanent, less conspicuous influence of persons of dissolute character, upon the more moral, and especially upon the younger ones, he cannot ascertain, and consequently cannot prevent. But precisely this influence is the most injurious. The language used in the mills is characterised by many witnesses in the report of 1833, as "indecent," "bad," "filthy," etc. It is the same process upon a small scale which we have already witnessed upon a large one in the great cities. The centralisation of population has the same influence upon the same persons, whether it affects them in a great city or a small factory. The smaller the mill the closer the packing, and the more unavoidable the contact; and the consequences are not wanting. A witness in Leicester said that he would rather let his daughter beg than go into a factory; that they are perfect gates of hell; that most of the prostitutes of the town had their employment in the mills to thank for their present situation. Another, in Manchester, did not hesitate to assert that three-fourths of the young factory employees, from fourteen to twenty years of age, were unchaste. Commissioner Cowell expresses it as his opinion, that the morality of the factory operatives is somewhat below the average of that of the working-class in general. And Dr. Hawkins says:

"An estimate of sexual morality cannot readily be reduced to figures; but if I may trust my own observations and the general opinion of those with whom I have spoken, as well as the whole tenor of the testimony furnished me, the aspect of the influence of factory life upon the morality of the youthful female population is most depressing."

It is, besides, a matter of course that factory servitude, like any other, and to an even higher degree, confers the jus primae noctis upon the master. In this respect also the employer is sovereign over the persons and charms of his employees. The threat of discharge suffices to overcome all resistances in nine cases out of ten, if not in ninety-nine out of a hundred, in girls who, in any case, have no strong inducements to chastity. If the master is mean enough, and the official report mentions several such cases, his mill is also his harem; and the fact that not all manufacturers use their power, does not in the least change the position of the girls. In the beginning of manufacturing industry, when most of the employers were upstarts without education or consideration for the hypocrisy of society, they let nothing interfere with the exercise of their vested rights.

To form a correct judgment of the influence of factory-work upon the health of the female sex, it is necessary first to consider the work of children, and then the nature of the work itself. From the beginning of manufacturing industry, children have been employed in mills, at first almost exclusively by reason of the smallness of the machines, which were later enlarged. Even children from the work-houses were employed in multitudes, being rented out for a number of years to the manufacturers as apprentices. They were lodged, fed, and clothed in common, and were,
of course, completely the slaves of their masters, by whom they were treated with the utmost recklessness and barbarity. As early as 1786, the public objection to this revolting system found such vigorous expression through Dr. Percival and Sir Robert Peel (father of the Cabinet Minister, and himself a cotton manufacturer), that in 1802 Parliament passed an Apprentices' Bill, by which the most crying evils were removed. Gradually the increasing competition of free workpeople crowded out the whole apprentice system; factories were built in cities, machinery was constructed on a larger scale, and workrooms were made more airy and wholesome; gradually, too, more work was found for adults and young persons. The number of children in the mills diminished somewhat, and the age at which they began to work rose a little; few children under eight or nine years were now employed. Later, as we shall see, the power of the State intervened several times to protect them from the money-greed of the bourgeoisie.

The great mortality among children of the working-class, and especially among those of the factory operatives, is proof enough of the unwholesome conditions under which they pass their first year. These influences are at work, of course, among the children who survive, but not quite so powerfully as upon those who succumb. The result in the most favourable case is a tendency to disease, or some check in development, and consequent less than normal vigour of the constitution. A nine years old child of a factory operative that has grown up in want, privation, and changing conditions, in cold and damp, with insufficient clothing and unwholesome dwellings, is far from having the working force of a child brought up under healthier conditions. At nine years of age it is sent into the mill to work 6½ hours (formerly 8, earlier still, 12 to 14, even 16 hours) daily, until the thirteenth year; then twelve hours until the eighteenth year. The old enfainting influences continue, while the work is added to them. It is not to be denied that a child of nine years, even an operative's child, can hold out through 6½ hours' daily work, without any one being able to trace visible bad results in its development directly to this cause; but in no case can its presence in the damp, heavy air of the factory, often at once warm and wet, contribute to good health; and, in any case, it is unpardonable to sacrifice to the greed of an unfeeling bourgeoisie the time of children which should be devoted solely to their physical and mental development, withdraw them from school and the fresh air, in order to wear them out for the benefit of the manufacturers. The bourgeoisie says: "If we do not employ the children in the mills, they only remain under conditions unfavourable to their development;" and this is true on the whole. But what does this mean if it is not a confession that the bourgeoisie first places the children of the working-class under unfavourable conditions, and then exploits these bad conditions for its own benefit, appeals to that which is as much its fault as the factory system, excuses the sin of to-day with the sin of yesterday? And if the Factory Act did not in some measure fatter their hands, how this "humane," this "benevolent" bourgeoisie, which has built its factories solely for the good of the working-class, would take care of the interests of these workers! Let us hear how they acted before the factory inspector was at their heels. Their own admitted testimony shall convict them in the report of the Factories' Inquiry Commission of 1833.

The report of the Central Commission relates that the manufacturers began to employ children rarely of five years, often of six, very often of seven, usually of eight to nine years; that the working-day often lasted fourteen to sixteen hours, exclusive of meals and intervals; that the manufacturers permitted overlookers to flog and maltreat children, and often took an active part in so doing themselves. One case is related of a Scotch manufacturer, who rode after a sixteen years old runaway, forced him to return running after the employer as fast as the master's horse trotted, and beat him the whole way with a long whip. In the large towns where the operatives resisted more vigorously, such things naturally happened less often. But even this long working-day failed to satisfy the greed of the capitalists. Their aim was to make the capital invested in the building and machinery produce

1 Stuart Evidence, p. 35.
the highest return, by every available means, to make it work as actively as possible. Hence the manufacturers introduced the shameful system of night-work. Some of them employed two sets of operatives, each numerous enough to fill the whole mill, and let one set work the twelve hours of the day, and the other twelve hours of the night. It is needless to picture the effect upon the frames of young children, and even upon the health of young persons and adults, produced by permanent loss of sleep at night, which cannot be made good by any amount of sleep during the day. Irritation of the whole nervous system, with general lassitude and enfeeblement of the entire frame, were the inevitable results, with the fostering of temptation to drunkenness and unbridled sexual indulgence. One manufacturer testifies that during the two years in which night-work was carried on in his factory, the number of illegitimate children born was doubled, and such general demoralisation prevailed that he was obliged to give up night-work. Other manufacturers were yet more barbarous, requiring many hands to work thirty to forty hours at a stretch, several times a week, letting them get a couple of hours sleep only, because the night-shift was not complete, but calculated to replace a part of the operatives only.

The reports of the Commission touching this barbarism surpass everything that is known to me in this line. Such infamies, as are here related, are nowhere else to be found—yet we shall see that the bourgeoisie constantly appeals to the testimony of the Commission as being in its own favour. The consequences of these cruelties became evident quickly enough. The Commissioners mention a crowd of cripples who appeared before them, who clearly owed their distortion to the long working-hours. This distortion usually consists of a curving of the spinal column and legs, and is described as follows by Francis Sharp, M.R.C.S., of Leeds: 2

"I never saw the peculiar bending of the lower ends of the thigh bones before I came to Leeds. At first I thought it was"

1 Tufnell Evidence, p. 91.
2 Dr. Loundon Evidence, pp. 12, 13.

rachitis, but I was soon led to change my opinion in consequence of the mass of patients who presented themselves at the hospital, and the appearances of the disease at an age (from the fourteenth to the eighteenth year) in which children are usually not subject to rachitis, as well as by the circumstances that the malady had first appeared after children began to work in the mills. Thus far I have seen about a hundred such cases, and can, most decidedly, express the opinion that they are the consequences of overwork. So far as I know they were all mill children, and themselves attributed the evil to this cause. The number of cases of curvature of the spine which have fallen under my observation, and which were evidently consequent upon too protracted standing, was not less than three hundred."

Precisely similar is the testimony of Dr. Ray, for eighteen years physician in the hospital in Leeds: 1

"Malformations of the spine are very frequent among mill-hands; some of them consequent upon mere overwork, others the effect of long work upon constitutions originally feeble, or weakened by bad food. Deformities seem even more frequent than these diseases; the knees were bent inward, the ligaments very often relaxed and enfeebled, and the long bones of the legs bent. The thick ends of these long bones were especially apt to be bent and disproportionately developed, and these patients came from the factories in which long work-hours were of frequent occurrence."

Surgeons Beaumont and Sharp, of Bradford, bear the same testimony. The reports of Drinkwater, Power, and Dr. Loundon contain a multitude of examples of such distortions, and those of Tufnell and Sir David Barry, which are less directed to this point, give single examples. 2 The Commissioners for Lancashire, Cewell, Tufnell, and Hawkins, have almost wholly neglected this aspect of the physiological results of the factory system, though this district rivals Yorkshire in the number of cripples. I have

1 Dr. Loundon Evidence, p. 16.
2 Drinkwater Evidence, pp. 72, 80, 146, 148, 150 (two brothers); 69 (two brothers); 150, and many others.
Power Evidence, pp. 62, 68, 67 (two cases); 68 (three cases); 69 (two cases); in Leeds, pp. 59, 31, 40, 45, 53, et seq.
Loundon Evidence, pp. 4, 7 (four cases); 8 (several cases), etc.
Sir D. Barry Evidence, pp. 8, 9, 13, 21, 32, 44, 53 (three cases), etc.
Tufnell Evidence, pp. 5, 6, 16, etc.
seldom traversed Manchester without meeting three or four of them, suffering from precisely the same distortions of the spinal columns and legs as that described, and I have often been able to observe them closely. I know one personally who corresponds exactly with the foregoing description of Dr. Ray, and who got into this condition in Mr. Douglas' factory in Pendleton, an establishment which enjoys an unenviable notoriety among the operatives by reason of the former long working periods continued night after night. It is evident, at a glance, whence the distortions of these cripples come; they all look exactly alike. The knees are bent inward and backwards, the ankles deformed and thick, and the spinal column often bent forwards or to one side. But the crown belongs to the philanthropic manufacturers of the Macclesfield silk district. They employed the youngest children of all, even from five to six years of age. In the supplementary testimony of Commissioner Tunell, I find the statement of a certain factory manager Wright, both of whose sisters were most shamefully crippled, and who had once counted the cripples in several streets, some of them the cleanest and neatest streets of Macclesfield. He found in Townley Street ten, George Street five, Charlotte Street four, Watercote fifteen, Bank Top three, Lord Street seven, Mill Lane twelve, Great George Street two, in the workhouse two, Park Green one, Pockford Street two, whose families all unanimously declared that the cripples had become such in consequence of overwork in the silk-twisting mills. One boy is mentioned so crippled as not to be able to go upstairs, and girls deformed in back and hips.

Other deformities also have proceeded from this overwork, especially flattening of the foot, which Sir D. Barry frequently observed, as did the physicians and surgeons in Leeds. In cases, in which a stronger constitution, better food, and other more favourable circumstances enabled the young operative to resist this effect of a barbarous exploitation, we find, at least, pain in the back,

1 Factories Inquiry Commission's Report, 1836, Sir D. Barry Evidence, p. 21 (two cases).
2 Factories Inquiry Commission's Report, 1836, London Evidence, pp. 15, 16, etc.

hips, and legs, swollen joints, varicose veins, and large, persistent ulcers in the thighs and calves. These affections are almost universal among the operatives. The reports of Stuart, Mackintosh, and Sir D. Barry contain hundreds of examples; indeed, they know almost no operative who did not suffer from some of these affections; and in the remaining reports, the occurrence of the same phenomena is attested by many physicians. The reports covering Scotland place it beyond all doubt, that a working-day of thirteen hours, even for men and women from eighteen to twenty-two years of age, produces at least these consequences, both in the flax-spinning mills of Dundee and Dunfermline, and in the cotton mills of Glasgow and Lanark.

All these affections are easily explained by the nature of factory work, which is, as the manufacturers say, very "light," and precisely by reason of its lightness, more enervating than any other. The operatives have little to do, but must stand the whole time. Any one who sits down, say upon a window-lodge or a basket, is fixed, and this perpetual upright position, this constant mechanical pressure of the upper portions of the body upon spinal column, hips, and legs, inevitably produces the results mentioned. This standing is not required by the work itself, and at Nottingham chairs have been introduced, with the result that these affections disappeared, and the operatives ceased to object to the length of the working-day. But in a factory where the operative works solely for the bourgeoisie, and has small interest in doing his work well, he would probably use the seats more than would be agreeable and profitable to the manufacturer; and in order that somewhat less raw material may be spoiled for the bourgeoisie, the operative must sacrifice health and strength. This long protracted upright position, with the bad atmosphere prevalent in the mills, entails, besides the deformities mentioned, a marked relaxation of all vital energies, and, in consequence, all sorts of other affections general rather than local. The atmosphere of the factories is, as a rule, at once damp and warm, unusually warmer.
than is necessary, and, when the ventilation is not very good, impure, heavy, deficient in oxygen, filled with dust and the smell of the machine oil, which almost everywhere smeared the floor, sinks into it, and becomes rank. The operatives are lightly clad by reason of the warmth, and would readily take cold in case of irregularity of the temperature; a draught is distasteful to them, the general evaporation which gradually takes possession of all the physical functions diminishes the animal warmth: this must be replaced from without, and nothing is therefore more agreeable to the operative than to have all the doors and windows closed, and to stay in his warm factory-air. Then comes the sudden change of temperature on going out into the cold and wet or frosty atmosphere, without the means of protection from the rain, or of changing wet clothing for dry, a circumstance which perpetually produces colds. And when one reflects that, with all this, not one single muscle of the body is really exercised, really called into activity, except perhaps those of the legs; that nothing whatsoever counteracts the enervating, relaxing tendency of all these conditions; that every influence is wanting which might give the muscles strength, the fibres elasticity and consistency; that from youth up, the operative is deprived of all fresh air recreation, it is impossible to wonder at the almost unanimous testimony of the physicians in the Factories' Report, that they find a great lack of ability to resist disease, a general depression in vital activity, a constant relaxation of the mental and physical powers. Let us hear Sir D. Barry first: ¹

"The unfavourable influences of mill-work upon the hands are the following: (1) The inevitable necessity of forcing their mental and bodily effort to keep pace with a machine moved by a uniform and unceasing motive power. (2) Continuance in an upright position during unnaturally long and quickly recurring periods. (3) Loss of sleep in consequence of too long working-hours, pain in the legs, and general physical derangement. To these are often added low, crowded, dusty, or damp workrooms, impure air, a high temperature, and constant perspiration. Hence the boys especially very soon and with but few exceptions, lose the rosy freshness of childhood, and become paler and thinner than other boys. Even the hand-waver's bound boy, who sits before his loom with his bare feet resting upon the clay-floor, retains a fresher appearance, because he occasionally goes into the fresh air for a time. But the mill child has not a moment free except for meals, and never goes into the fresh air except on its way to them. All adult male spinners are pale and thin, suffer from copious appetite and indigestion; and as they are all trained in the mills from their youth up, and there are very few tall, athletic men among them, the conclusion is justified that their occupation is very unfavourable for the development of the male constitution; females bear this work far better." (Very naturally. But we shall see that they have their own diseases.)

So, too, Power: ¹

"I can bear witness that the factory system in Bradford has engendered a multitude of cripples, and that the effect of long continued labour upon the physique is apparent, not alone in actual deformity, but also, and much more generally, in stunted growth, relaxation of the muscles, and delicacy of the whole frame."

So, too, F. Sharp, in Leeds, the surgeon already quoted:

"When I moved from Scarborough to Leeds, I was at once struck by the fact that the general appearance of the children was much paler, and their fibre less vigorous here than in Scarborough and its environs. I saw, too, that many children were exceptionally small for their age. I have met with numberless cases of scrofula, lung trouble, mesenteric affections, and indigestion, concerning which I, as a medical man, have no doubt that they arose from mill work. I believe that the nervous energy of the body is weakened by the long hours, and the foundation of many diseases laid. If people from the country were not constantly coming in, the race of mill-hands would soon be wholly degenerate."

So, too, Beaumont, surgeon in Bradford:

"To my thinking, the system, according to which work is done in the mills here, produces a peculiar relaxation of the whole system. Power Report, p. 74.

¹The surgeons in England are scientifically educated as well as the physicians, and have, in general, medical as well as surgical practice. They are in general, for various reasons, preferred to the physicians.
organism, and thereby makes children in the highest degree susceptible to epidemic, as well as to incipient illness. I regard the absence of all appropriate regulations for ventilation and cleanliness in the mills very decidedly as the chief cause of that peculiar tendency or susceptibility to morbid affections which I have so frequently met in my practice."

Similar testimony is borne by Dr. Ray:

(1) "I have had opportunity of observing the effects of the factory system upon the health of children under the most favourable circumstances (in Wood's mill, in Bradford, the best arranged of the district, in which he was factory surgeon). (2) These effects are decidedly, and to a very great extent, injurious, even under these most favourable circumstances. (3) In the year 1842, three-fifths of all the children employed in Wood's mill were treated by me. (4) The worst effect is not the predominance of deformities, but of enfeebled and morbid constitutions. (5) All this is greatly improved since the working-hours of children have been reduced at Wood's to ten."

The Commissioner, Dr. Loudon himself, who cites these witnesses, says:

"In conclusion, I think it has been clearly proved that children have been worked a most unreasonable and cruel length of time daily, and that even adults have been expected to do a certain quantity of labour which scarcely any human being is able to endure. The consequence is that many have died prematurely, and others are afflicted for life with defective constitutions, and the fear of a posterity enfeebled by the shattered constitution of the survivors is but too well founded, from a physiological point of view."

And, finally, Dr. Hawkins, in speaking of Manchester:

"I believe that most travellers are struck by the lowness of stature, the leanness and the paleness which present themselves so commonly to the eye at Manchester, and above all, among the factory classes. I have never been in any town in Great Britain, nor in Europe, in which degeneracy of form and colour from the national standard has been so obvious. Among the married women all the characteristic peculiarities of the English wife are conspicuously wanting. I must confess that all the boys and girls brought before me from the Manchester mills had a depressed appearance, and were very pale. In the expression of their faces lay nothing of the usual mobility, liveliness, and cheeriness of youth. Many of them told me that they felt not the slightest inclination to play out of doors on Saturday and Sunday, but preferred to be quiet at home."

I add, at once, another passage of Hawkins' report, which only half belongs here, but may be quoted here as well as anywhere else:

"Intemperance, excess, and want of providence are the chief faults of the factory population, and these evils may be readily traced to the habits which are formed under the present system, and almost inevitably arise from it. It is universally admitted that indigence, hypochondria, and general debility affect this class to a very great extent. After twelve hours of monotonous toil, it is but natural to look about for a stimulant of one sort or another; but when the above-mentioned diseased conditions are added to the customary weariness, people will quickly and repeatedly take refuge inspirits and liquors."

For all this testimony of the physicians and commissioners, the report itself offers hundreds of cases of proof. That the growth of young operatives is stunted, by their work, hundreds of statements testify; among others, Cowell gives the weight of 46 youths of 17 years of age, from one Sunday school, of whom 26 employed in mills, averaged 104.5 pounds, and 20 not employed in mills, 117.7 pounds. One of the largest manufacturers of Manchester, leader of the opposition against the working-men, I think Robert Hyde Greg himself, said, on one occasion, that if things went on as at present, the operatives of Lancashire would soon be a race of pigmies.1 A recruiting officer2 testified that operatives are little adapted for military service, looked thin and nervous, and were frequently rejected by the surgeons as unfit. In Manchester he could hardly get men of five feet eight inches; they were usually only five feet six to seven, whereas in the agricultural districts, most of the recruits were five feet eight.

The men wear out very early in consequence of the conditions

1 This statement is not taken from the report.
2 Tufnell, p. 69.
under which they live and work. Most of them are unfit for work at forty years, a few hold out to forty-five, almost none to fifty years of age. This is caused not only by the general enfeeblement of the frame, but also very often by a failure of the sight, which is a result of mule-spinning, in which the operatives is obliged to fix his gaze upon a long row of fine, parallel threads, and so greatly to strain the sight.

Of 1,600 operatives employed in several factories in Harpur and Lanark, but 10 were over 45 years of age; of 22,094 operatives in diverse factories in Stockport and Manchester, but 143 were over 45 years old. Of those 143, 16 were retained as a special favour, and one was doing the work of a child. A list of 131 spinners contained but seven over 45 years, and yet the whole 131 were rejected by the manufacturers, to whom they applied for work, as "too old," and were without means of support by reason of old age! Mr. Ashworth, a large manufacturer, admits in a letter to Lord Ashley, that, towards the forties, the spinners can no longer prepare the required quantity of yarn, and are therefore "sometimes" discharged; he calls operatives forty years of age "old people!" Commissioner Mackintosh expresses himself in the same way in the report of 1833:

"Although I was prepared for it from the way the children are employed, I still found it difficult to believe the statements of the older hands as to their ages; they age so very early."

Surgeon Smellie, of Glasgow, who treated operatives chiefly, says that forty years is old age for them.¹ And similar evidence may be found elsewhere.² In Manchester, this premature old age among the operatives is so universal that almost every man of forty would be taken for ten to fifteen years older, while the prosperous classes, men as well as women, preserve their appearance exceedingly well if they do not drink too heavily.

The influence of factory-work upon the female physique also is marked and peculiar. The deformities entailed by long hours of

¹Stuart Evidence, p. 101.  
²Tulnley Evidence, pp. 3, 9, 15.

work are much more serious among women. Protracted work frequently causes deformities of the pelvis, partly in the shape of abnormal position and development of the hip bones, partly of malformation of the lower portion of the spinal column.

"Although," says Dr. Loudon, in his report, "no example of malformation of the pelvis and of some other affections came under my notice, these things are nevertheless so common, that every physician must regard them as probable consequences of such working-hours, and as vouched for besides by men of the highest medical credibility."

That factory operatives undergo more difficult confinement than other women is testified to by several midwives and accouchers, and also that they are more liable to miscarriage.¹ Moreover, they suffer from the general enfeeblement common to all operatives, and, when pregnant, continue to work in the factory up to the hour of delivery, because otherwise they lose their wages and are made to fear that they may be replaced if they stop away too soon. It frequently happens that women are at work one evening and delivered the next morning, and the case is none too rare of their being delivered in the factory among the machinery. And if the gentlemen of the bourgeoisie find nothing particularly shocking in this, their wives will perhaps admit that it is a piece of cruelty, an infamous act of barbarism, indirectly to force a pregnant woman to work twelve or thirteen hours daily (formerly still longer), up to the day of her delivery, in a standing position, with frequent stoopings. But this is not all. If these women are not obliged to resume work within two weeks, they are thankful, and count themselves fortunate. Many come back to the factory after eight, and even after three to four days, to resume full work. I once heard a manufacturer ask an overlooker: "Is so and so back yet?" "No."
"How long since she was confined?" "A week."
"She might surely have been back long ago. That one over there only stays three days." Naturally, fear of being discharged, dread of starvation drives her to the factory in spite of

¹Hawkins Report, p. 4; Evidence, p. 14, etc. etc. Hawkins Evidence, pp. 11, 13.
her weakness, in defiance of her pain. The interest of the manufacturer will not brook that his employees stay at home by reason of illness; they must not be ill, they must not venture to lie still through a long confinement, or he must stop his machinery or trouble his superior head with a temporary change of arrangements; and rather than do this, he discharges his people when they begin to be ill. Listen:

“A girl feels very ill, can scarcely do her work. Why does she not ask permission to go home? Ah! the master is very particular, and if we are away half a day, we risk being sent away altogether.”

Or Sir D. Barry.

“Thomas McDermott, workman, has slight fever. Cannot stay at home longer than four days, because he would fear of losing his place.”

And so it goes on in almost all the factories. The employment of young girls produces all sorts of irregularities during the period of development. In some, especially those who are better fed, the heat of the factories hastens this process, so that in single cases, girls of thirteen and fourteen are wholly mature. Robertson, whom I have already cited (mentioned in the Factory Inquiry Commission’s Report as the “eminently” gynaecologist of Manchester), relates in the North of England Medical and Surgical Journal, that he had seen a girl of eleven years who was not only a wholly developed woman, but pregnant, and that it was by no means rare in Manchester for women to be confined at fifteen years of age. In such cases, the influence of the warmth of the factories is the same as that of a tropical climate, and, as in such climates, the abnormally early development renews itself by correspondingly premature age and debility. On the other hand, retarded development of the female constitution occurs, the breasts mature late or not at all.° Menstruation first appears in the

seventeenth or eighteenth, sometimes in the twentieth year, and is often wholly wanting.° Irregular menstruation, coupled with great pain and numerous affections, especially with anemia, is very frequent, as the medical reports unanimously state.

Children of such mothers, particularly of those who are obliged to work during pregnancy, cannot be vigorous. They are, on the contrary, described in the report, especially in Manchester, as very feeble; and Barry alone asserts that they are healthy, but says further, that in Scotland, where his inspection lay, almost no married women worked in factories. Moreover, most of the factories there are in the country (with the exception of Glasgow), a circumstance which contributes greatly to the invigoration of the children. The operatives’ children in the neighbourhood of Manchester are nearly all thriving and rosy, while those within the city look pale and sallow; but with the ninth year the colour vanishes suddenly, because all are then sent into the factories, when it soon becomes impossible to distinguish the country from the city children.

But besides all this, there are some branches of factory-work which have an especially injurious effect. In many rooms of the cotton and flax-spinning mills, the air is filled with fibrous dust, which produces chest affections, especially among workers in the carding and combing-rooms. Some constitutions can bear it; some cannot; but the operative has no choice. He must take the room in which he finds work, whether his chest is sound or not. The most common effects of this breathing of dust are blood-sputting, hard, noisy breathing, pain in the chest, coughs, sleeplessness—in short, all the symptoms of asthma ending in the worst cases in consumption.° Especially unwholesome is the wet spinning of linen-yarn which is carried on by young girls and boys. The water spirits over them from the spindles, so that the front of their clothing is constantly wet through to the skin; and there is

1 Cowell Evidence, p. 77.
2 Sir D. Barry Evidence, p. 44.
Cowell, p. 56.
3 Dr. Hawkins Evidence, p. 11; Dr. Louden, p. 14, etc.; Sir D. Barry, p. 5.
4 Compare Stuart, pp. 13, 70, 101; Mackintosh, p. 24, etc.; Power Report on Nottingham, p. 63; Cowell, p. 33, etc.; Barry, p. 12; five cases in one factory, pp. 17, 44, 59, 60, etc.; Louden, p. 15.
always water standing on the floor. This is the case to a less
degree in the doubling-rooms of the cotton mills, and the result is
a constant succession of colds and affections of the chest. A
hoarse, rough voice is common to all operatives, but especially to
wet spinners and doublers. Stuart, Mackintosh, and Sir D. Barry
express themselves in the most vigorous terms as to the unwholesome
ness of this work, and the small consideration shown by most
of the manufacturers for the health of the girls who do it.
Another effect of flax-spinning is a peculiar deformity of the
shoulder, especially a projection of the right shoulder-blade, consequent
upon the nature of the work. This sort of spinning and
the throttle-spinning of cotton frequently produce diseases of the
knee-pan, which is used to check the spindle during the joining of
broken threads. The frequent stooping and the bending to the
low machines common to both these branches of work have, in
general, a stunting effect upon the growth of the operative. In
the throttle-room of the cotton mill at Manchester, in which I was
employed, I do not remember to have seen one single tall, well-built
girl; they were all short, dumpy, and badly-formed, decidedly
ugly in the whole development of the figure. But apart from all
these diseases and malformations, the limbs of the operatives
suffer in still another way. The work between the machinery
gives rise to multitudes of accidents of more or less serious nature,
which have for the operative the secondary effect of unfitting him
for his work more or less completely. The most common accident
is the squeezing off of a single joint of a finger, somewhat less
common the loss of the whole finger, half a whole hand, an
arm, etc., in the machinery. Lockjaw very often follows, even
upon the lesser among these injuries, and brings death with it.
Besides the deformed persons, a great number of maimed ones
may be seen going about in Manchester; this one has lost an arm
or a part of one, that one a foot, the third half a leg; it is like
living in the midst of an army just returned from a campaign.
But the most dangerous portion of the machinery is the strapping
which conveys motive power from the shaft to the separate
machines, especially if it contains buckles, which, however, are
rarely used now. Whoever is seized by the strap is carried up
with lightning speed, thrown against the ceiling above and floor
below with such force that there is rarely a whole bone left in
the body, and death follows instantly. Between June 13th and
August 3rd, 1843, the Manchester Guardian reported the following
serious accidents (the trifling ones it does not notice): June 12th,
(a boy died in Manchester of lockjaw, caused by his hand being
crushed between wheels. June 16th, a youth in Saddleworth
seized by a wheel and carried away with it; died, utterly mangled.
June 29th, a young man at Green Acres Moor, near Manchester,
at work in a machine house, fell under the grindstone, which broke
two of his ribs and lacerated him terribly. July 24th, a girl in
Oldham died, carried around fifty times by a strap; no bone un-
broken. July 27th, a girl in Manchester seized by the blower
(the first machine that receives the raw cotton), and died of in-
juries received. August 3rd, a bobbin turner died in Dukinfield,
cought in a strap, every rib broken. In the year 1843, the Man-
chester Infirmary treated 962 cases of wounds and mutilations
cased by machinery, while the number of all other accidents
within the district of the hospital was 2,428, so that for five acci-
dents from all other causes, two were caused by machinery. The
accidents which happened in Salford are not included here, nor
those treated by surgeons in private practice. In such cases,
whether or not the accident units the victim for further work,
the employer, at best, pays the doctor, or, in very exceptional
cases, he may pay wages during treatment; what becomes of the
operative afterwards, in case he cannot work, is no concern of the
employer.

The Factory Report says on this subject, that employers must be
made responsible for all cases, since children cannot take care, and
adults will take care in their own interest. But the gentle-
men who write the report are bourgeois, and so they must con-
tradict themselves and bring up later all sorts of bosh on the sub-
ject of the culpable temerity of the operatives.

The state of the case is this: If children cannot take care, the
employment of children must be forbidden. If adults are reckless,
they must be mere overgrown children on a plane of intelligence which does not enable them to appreciate the danger in its full scope; and who is to blame for this but the bourgeoisie which keeps them in a condition in which their intelligence cannot develop? Or the machinery is ill-arranged, and must be surrounded with fencing, to supply which falls to the share of the bourgeoisie. Or the operative is under inducements which outweigh the threatened danger; he must work rapidly to earn his wages, has no time to take care, and for this, too, the bourgeoisie is to blame. Many accidents happen, for instance, while the operatives are cleaning machinery in motion. Why? Because the bourgeoisie would otherwise oblige the worker to clean the machinery during the free hours while it is not going, and the worker naturally is not disposed to sacrifice any part of his free time. Every free hour is so precious to the worker that he often risks his life twice a week rather than sacrifice one of them to the bourgeoisie. Let the employer take from working-hours the time required for cleaning the machinery, and it will never again occur to an operative to clean machinery in motion. In short, from whatever point of view, the blame falls ultimately on the manufacturer, and of him should be required, at the very least, life-long support of the incapacitated operative, and support of the victim's family in case death follows the accident. In the earliest period of manufacture, the accidents were much more numerous in proportion than now, for the machinery was inferior, smaller, more crowded, and almost never fenced. But the number is still large enough, as the foregoing cases prove, to arouse grave question as to a state of things which permits so many deformities and mutilations for the benefit of a single class, and plunges so many industrious working-people into want and starvation by reason of injuries undergone in the service and through the fault of the bourgeoisie.

A pretty list of diseases engendered purely by the hateful money greed of the manufacturers! Women made unfit for child-bearing, children deformed, men enfeebled, limbs crushed, whole generations wrecked, afflicted with disease and infirmity, purely to fill the purses of the bourgeoisie. And when one reads of the barbarism of single cases, how children are seized naked in bed by the overlookers, and driven with blows and kicks to the factory, their clothing over their arms,¹ how their sleepiness is driven off with blows, how they fall asleep over their work nevertheless, how one poor child sprang up, still asleep, at the call of the overlooker, and mechanically went through the operations of its work after its machine was stopped; when one reads how children, too tired to go home, hide away in the wool in the drying-room to sleep there, and could only be driven out of the factory with straps; how many hundreds came home so tired every night, that they could eat no supper for sleepiness and want of appetite, that their parents found them kneeling by the bedside, where they had fallen asleep during their prayers; when one reads all this and a hundred other villainies and inanities in this one report, all testified to on oath, confirmed by several witnesses, deposed by men whom the commissioners themselves declare trustworthy; when one reflects that this is a Liberal report, a bourgeois report, made for the purpose of reversing the previous Tory report, and rehabilitating the pureness of heart of the manufacturers, that the commissioners themselves are on the side of the bourgeoisie, and report all these things against their own will, how can one be otherwise than filled with wrath and resentment against a class which boasts of philanthropy and self-sacrifice, while its one object is to fill its purse à tout prix! Meanwhile, let us listen to the bourgeoisie speaking through the mouth of its chosen apostle, Dr. Ure, who relates in his "Philosophy of Manufactures,"² that the workers have been told that their wages bore no proportion to their sacrifices, the good understanding between masters and men being thus disturbed. Instead of this, the working-men should have striven to recommend themselves by attention and industry, and should have rejoiced in the prosperity of their masters. They would then become overseers, superintendents, and finally partners, and would thus—(Oh! Wisdom, thou speakest as the dove!)

1 Stuart, p. 39.
2 "Philosophy of Manufactures," by Dr. Andrew Ure, p. 277, et seq.
have increased at the same time the demand for their companions' labour in the market!

"Had it not been for the violent collisions and interruptions resulting from erroneous views among the operatives, the factory system would have been developed still more rapidly and beneficially."

Hereupon follows a long Jeremiad upon the spirit of resistance of the operatives, and on the occasion of a strike of the best paid workers, the fine spinners, the following naïve observation:

"In fact, it was their high wages which enabled them to maintain a stipendiary committee in affluence, and to pamper themselves into nervous ailments, by a diet too rich and exciting for their indoor employments."

Let us hear how the bourgeoisie describes the work of children:

"I have visited many factories, both in Manchester and in the surrounding districts, during a period of several months, entering the spinning-rooms unexpectedly, and often alone, at different times of the day, and I never saw a single instance of corporal chastisement inflicted on a child; nor, indeed, did I ever see children in ill-humour. They seemed to be always cheerful and alert; taking pleasure in the light play of their muscles, enjoying the mobility natural to their age. The scene of industry, so far from exciting sad emotions, in my mind, was always exhilarating. It was delightful to observe the nimbleness with which they pieced broken ends, as the mule carriage began to recede from the fixed roller beam, and to see them at leisure, after a few seconds' exercise of their tiny fingers, to amuse themselves in any attitude they chose, till the stretch and winding on were once more completed. The work of these lively elves seemed to resemble a sport, in which habit gave them a pleasing dexterity. Conscious of their skill, they were delighted to show it off to any stranger. As to exhaustion by the day's work, they evinced no trace of it on emerging from the mill in the evening; for they immediately began to skip about any neighbouring play-ground, and to commence their little games with the same alacrity as boys issuing from a school."

1 Ibid., 277. 2 Ibid., p. 398. 3 Ibid., p. 298.

Naturally! As though the immediate movement of every muscle were not an urgent necessity for frames grown at once stiff and relaxed! But Ure should have waited to see whether this momentary excitement had not subsided after a couple of minutes. And besides, Ure could see this whole performance only in the afternoon after five or six hours' work, but not in the evening! As to the health of the operatives, the bourgeoisie has the boundless impudence to cite the report of 1833 just quoted in a thousand places, as testimony for the excellent health of these people; to try to prove by detached and garbled quotations that no trace of scrofula can be found among them, and, what is quite true, that the factory system frees them from all acute diseases (that they have every variety of chronic affection instead he naturally conceals). To explain the impudence with which our friend Ure palns off the grossest falsehoods upon the English public, it must be known that the report consists of three large folio volumes, which it never occurs to a well-fed English bourgeoisie to study through. Let us hear further how he expresses himself as to the Factory Act of 1834, passed by the Liberal bourgeoisie, and imposing only the most meagre limitations upon the manufacturers, as we shall see. This law, especially its compulsory education clause, he calls an absurd and despotic measure directed against the manufacturers, through which all children under twelve years of age have been thrown out of employment; and with what results? The children thus discharged from their light and useful occupation receive no education whatever; cast out from the warm spinning-room into a cold world, they subsist only by begging and stealing, a life in sad contrast with their steadily improving condition in the factory and in Sunday school. Under the mask of philanthropy, this law intensifies the sufferings of the poor, and will greatly restrict the conscientious manufacturer in his useful work, if, indeed, it does not wholly stop him. The ruinous influence of the factory system began at an early day to attract general attention. We have already alluded to the Apprentices' Act of 1802. Later, towards 1817, Robert Owen, 1 Dr. Andrew Ure. "Philosophy of Manufactures," pp. 405, 406, et seq.
then a manufacturer in New Lanark, in Scotland, afterwards founder of English Socialism, began to call the attention of the Government, by memorials and petitions, to the necessity of legislative guarantees for the health of the operatives, and especially of children. The late Sir Robert Peel and other philanthropists united with him, and gradually secured the Factory Acts of 1818, 1825, and 1831, of which the first two were never enforced, and the last only here and there. This law of 1831, based upon the motion of Sir J. C. Hobhouse, provided that in cotton mills no one under twenty-one should be employed between half-past seven at night and half-past five in the morning; and that in all factories young persons under eighteen should work no longer than twelve hours daily, and nine hours on Saturday. But since operatives could not testify against their masters without being discharged, this law helped matters very little. In the great cities, where the operatives were more revolting, the larger manufacturers came to an agreement among themselves to obey the law; but even there, there were many who, like the employers in the country, did not trouble themselves about it. Meanwhile, the demand for a ten hours' law had become lively among the operatives; that is, for a law which should forbid all operatives under eighteen years of age to work longer than ten hours daily; the Trades Unions, by their agitation, made this demand general throughout the manufacturing population; the philanthropic section of the Tory party, then led by Michael Sadler, seized upon the plan, and brought it before Parliament. Sadler obtained a parliamentary committee for the investigation of the factory system, and this committee reported in 1832. Its report was emphatically partisan, composed by strong enemies of the factory system, for party ends. Sadler permitted himself to be betrayed by his noble enthusiasm into the most distorted and erroneous statements, drew from his witnesses by the very form of his questions, answers which contained the truth, but truth in a perverted form. The manufacturers themselves, incensed at a report which represented them as monsters, now demanded an official investigation; they knew that an exact report must, in this case, be advantageous to them; they knew that Whigs, genuine bourgeoisie, were at the helm, with whom they were upon good terms, whose principles were opposed to any restriction upon manufacture. They obtained a commission, in due course, composed of Liberal bourgeoisie, whose report I have so often cited. This comes somewhat nearer the truth than Sadler's, but its deviations thenceforth are in the opposite direction. On every page it betrays sympathy with the manufacturers, distrust of the Sadler report, repugnance to the working-men agitating independently and the supporters of the Ten Hours' Bill. It nowhere recognises the right of the working-man to a life worthy of a human being, to independent activity, and opinions of his own. It reproaches the operatives that in sustaining the Ten Hours' Bill they thought, not of the children only, but of themselves as well; it calls the working-men engaged in the agitation demagogues, ill-intentioned, malicious, etc., is written, in short, on the side of the bourgeoisie; and still it cannot whitewash the manufacturers, and still it leaves such a mass of infamies upon the shoulders of the employers, that even after this report, the agitation for the Ten Hours' Bill, the hatred against the manufacturers, and the committee's severest epithets applied to them are all fully justified. But there was the one difference, that whereas the Sadler report accuses the manufacturers of open, undisguised brutality, it now became evident that this brutality was chiefly carried on under the mask of civilization and humanity. Yet Dr. Hawkins, the medical commissioner for Lancashire, expresses himself decidedly in favour of the Ten Hours' Bill in the opening lines of his report, and Commissioner Mackintosh explains that his own report does not contain the whole truth, because it is very difficult to induce the operatives to testify against their employers, and because the manufacturers, besides being forced into greater concessions towards their operatives by the excitement among the latter, are often prepared for the inspection of the factories, have them swept, the speed of the machinery reduced, etc. In Lancashire especially they resorted to the device of bringing the overlookers of workrooms before the commissioners, and letting them testify as working-men to the humanity of the employers, the
wholesome effects of the work, and the indifference, if not the hostility of the operatives, towards the Ten Hours' Bill. But these are not genuine working-men; they are deserters from their class, who have entered the service of the bourgeoisie for better pay, and fight in the interests of the capitalists against the workers. Their interest is that of the capitalists, and they are, therefore, almost more hated by the workers than the manufacturers themselves.

And yet this report suffices wholly to exhibit the most shameful recklessness of the manufacturing bourgeoisie towards its employees, the whole infamy of the industrial exploiting system in its full inhumanity. Nothing is more revolting than to compare the long register of diseases and deformities engendered by overwork, in this report, with the cold, calculating political economy of the manufacturers, by which they try to prove that they, and with them all England, must go to ruin, if they should be forbidden to cripple so and so many children every year. The language of Dr. Ure alone, which I have quoted, would be yet more revolting if it were not so preposterous.

The result of this report was the Factory Act of 1834, which forbade the employment of children under nine years of age (except in silk mills), limited the working-hours of children between 9-13 years to 48 per week, or 9 hours in any one day at the utmost; that of young persons from 14-18 years of age to 69 per week, or 12 on any one day as the maximum, provided for an hour and a half as the minimum interval for meals, and repealed the total prohibition of night-work for persons under eighteen years of age. Compulsory school attendance two hours daily was prescribed for all children under fourteen years, and the manufacturer declared punishable in case of employing children without a certificate of age from the factory surgeon, and a certificate of school attendance from the teacher. As recompense, the employer was permitted to withdraw one penny from the child's weekly earnings to pay the teacher. Further, surgeons and inspectors were appointed to visit the factories at all times, take testimony of operatives on oath, and enforce the law by prosecution before a Justice of the Peace. This is the law against which Dr. Ure inveighs in such unmeasured terms!

The consequence of this law, and especially of the appointment of inspectors, was the reduction of working-hours to an average of twelve to thirteen, and the superseding of children as far as possible. Hereupon some of the most crying evils disappeared almost wholly. Deformities arose now only in cases of weak constitution, and the effects of overwork became much less conspicuous. Nevertheless, enough testimony remains to be found in the Factory Report, that the lesser evils, swelling of the ankles, weakness and pain in the legs, hips, and back, varicose veins, ulcers on the lower extremities, general weakness, especially of the pelvic region, nausea, want of appetite alternating with unnatural hunger, indigestion, hypochondria, affections of the chest in consequence of the dust and foul atmosphere of the factories, etc., all occur among employees subject to the provisions of Sir J. C. Hobhouse's law (of 1831), which prescribes twelve to thirteen hours as the maximum. The reports from Glasgow and Manchester are especially worthy of attention in this respect. These evils remained too, after the law of 1834, and continue to undermine the health of the working-class to this day. Care has been taken to give the brutal profit-greed of the bourgeoisie a hypocritical, civilised form, to restrain the manufacturers through the arm of the law from too conspicuous villanies, and thus to give them a pretext for self-complacently parading their sham philanthropy. That is all. If a new commission were appointed to-day, it would find things pretty much as before. As to the extemporised compulsory attendance at school, it remained wholly a dead letter, since the Government failed to provide good schools. The manufacturers employed as teachers worn-out operatives, to whom they sent the children two hours daily, thus complying with the letter of the law; but the children learned nothing. And even the reports of the factory inspectors, which are limited to the scope of the inspector's duties, i.e., the enforcement of the Factory Act, give data enough to justify the conclusion that the old evils inevitably remain. Inspectors Horner and Saunders, in their reports for October and
December, 1844, state that, in a number of branches in which the employment of children can be dispensed with or superseded by that of adults, the working-day is still fourteen to sixteen hours, or even longer. Among the operatives in these branches they found numbers of young people who had just outgrown the provisions of the law. Many employers disregard the law, shorten the meal times, work children longer than is permitted, and try to evade prosecution, knowing that the possible fines are trifling in comparison with the certain profits derivable from the offence. Just at present especially, while business is exceptionally brisk, they are under great temptation in this respect.

Meanwhile the agitation for the Ten Hours’ Bill by no means died out among the operatives; in 1839 it was under full headway once more, and Sadler’s place, he having died, was filled in the House of Commons by Lord Ashley and Richard Oastler, both Tories. Oastler especially, who carried on a constant agitation in the factory districts, and had been active in the same way during Sadler’s life, was the particular favourite of the workingmen. They called him their “good old king,” “the king of the factory children,” and there is not a child in the factory districts that does not know and revere him, that does not join the procession which moves to welcome him when he enters a town. Oastler vigorously opposed the New Poor Law also, and was therefore imprisoned for debt by a Mr. Thornley, on whose estate he was employed as agent, and to whom he owed money. The Whigs offered repeatedly to pay his debt and confer other favours upon him if he would only give up his agitation against the Poor Law. But in vain; he remained in prison, whence he published his Fleet Papers against the factory system and the Poor Law.

The Tory Government of 1841 turned its attention once more to the Factory Acts. The Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, proposed, in 1843, a bill restricting the working-hours of children to six and one-half, and making the enactments for compulsory school attendance more effective; the principal point in this connection being a provision for better schools. This bill was, how-

* Afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury, died 1858.*

ever, wrecked by the jealousy of the dissenters; for, although compulsory religious instruction was not extended to the children of dissenters, the schools provided for were to be placed under the general supervision of the Established Church, and the Bible made the general reading-book; religion being thus made the foundation of all instruction, whence the dissenters felt themselves threatened. The manufacturers and the Liberals generally united with them, the working-men were divided by the Church question, and therefore inactive. The opponents of the bill, though outweighed in the great manufacturing towns, such as Salford and Stockport, and able in others, such as Manchester, to attack certain of its points only, for fear of the working-men, collected nevertheless nearly two million signatures for a petition against it, and Graham allowed himself to be so far intimidated as to withdraw the whole bill. The next year he omitted the school clauses, and proposed that, instead of the previous provisions, children between eight and thirteen years should be restricted to six and one-half hours, and so employed as to have either the whole morning or the whole afternoon free; that young people between thirteen and eighteen years, and all females, should be limited to twelve hours; and that the hitherto frequent evasions of the law should be prevented. Hardly had he proposed this bill, when the ten hours’ agitation was begun again more vigorously than ever. Oastler had just then regained his liberty; a number of his friends and a collection among the workers had paid his debt, and he threw himself into the movement with all his might. The defenders of the Ten Hours’ Bill in the House of Commons had increased in numbers, the masses of petitions supporting it which poured in from all sides brought them allies, and on March 19th, 1844, Lord Ashley carried, with a majority of 179 to 170, a resolution that the word “Night” in the Factory Act should express the time from six at night to six in the morning, whereby the prohibition of night-work came to mean the limitation of working-hours to twelve, including six hours, or ten hours of actual work a day. But the ministry did not agree to this. Sir James Graham began to threaten resignation from the Cabinet,
and at the next vote on the bill the House rejected by a small majority both ten and twelve hours! Graham and Peel now announced that they should introduce a new bill, and that if this failed to pass they should resign. The new bill was exactly the old Twelve Hours' Bill with some changes of form, and the same House of Commons which had rejected the principal points of this bill in March, now swallowed it whole. The reason of this was that most of the supporters of the Ten Hours' Bill were Tories who let fall the bill rather than the ministry; but be the motives what they may, the House of Commons by its votes upon this subject, each vote reversing the last, has brought itself into the greatest contempt among all the workers, and proved most brilliantly the Chartists' assertion of the necessity of its reform. Those members, who had formerly voted against the ministry, afterwards voted for it and rescued it. In all the divisions, the bulk of the opposition voted for and the bulk of its own party against the ministry. The foregoing propositions of Graham touched the employment of children six and one-half and of all other operatives twelve hours are now legislative provisions, and by them and by the limitation of over-work for making up time lost through breakdown of machinery or insufficient water-power by reason of frost or drought, a working-day of more than twelve hours has been made well-nigh impossible. There remains, however, no doubt that, in a very short time, the Ten Hours' Bill will really be adopted. The manufacturers are naturally all against it; there are perhaps not ten who are for it; they have used every honourable and dishonourable means against this dreaded measure, but with no other result than that of drawing down upon them the ever deepening hatred of the working-men. The bill will pass. What the working-men will do they can do, and that they will have this bill they proved last spring. The economic arguments of the manufacturers that a Ten Hours' Bill would increase the cost of production and inscrupulously the English producers for competition in foreign markets, and that wages must fall, are all half true; but they prove nothing except this, that the industrial greatness of England can be maintained only through the barbarous treatment of the operatives, the destruction of their health, the social, physical, and mental decay of whole generations. Naturally, if the Ten Hours' Bill were a final measure, it must ruin England; but since it must inevitably bring with it other measures which must draw England into a path wholly different from that hitherto followed, it can only prove an advance.

Let us turn to another side of the factory system which cannot be remedied by legislative provisions so easily as the diseases now engendered by it. We have already alluded in a general way to the nature of the employment, and enough in detail to be able to draw certain inferences from the facts given. The supervision of machinery, the joining of broken threads, is no activity which claims the operative's thinking powers, yet it is of a sort which prevents him from occupying his mind with other things. We have seen, too, that this work affords the muscles no opportunity for physical activity. Thus it is, properly speaking, not work, but toil, the most deadening, wearing process conceivable. The operative is condemned to let his physical and mental powers decay in this utter monotony, it is his mission to be bored every day and all day long from his eighth year. Moreover, he must not take a moment's rest; the engine moves unceasingly; the wheels, the straps, the spindles hum and rattle in his ears without a pause, and if he tries to snatch one instant, there is the overseer at his back with the book of fines. This condemnation to be buried alive in the mill, to give constant attention to the tireless machine is felt as the keenest torture by the operatives, and its action upon mind and body is in the long run stunning in the highest degree. There is no better means of inducing stupor than a period of factory work, and if the operatives have, nevertheless, not only resisted their intelligence, but cultivated and sharpened it more than other working-men, they have found this possible only in rebellion against their fate and against the bourgeoisie, the sole subject on which under all cir-

\[1\] It is notorious that the House of Commons made itself ridiculous a second time in the same session in the same way on the Sugar Question, when it first voted against the ministry and then for it, after an application of the ministerial whip.
cumstances they can think and feel while at work. Or, if this
indignation against the bourgeoisie does not become the supreme
passion of the working-man, the inevitable consequence is drunk-
keness and all that is generally called demoralisation. The
physical enervation and the sickness, universal in consequence of
the factory system, were enough to induce Commissioner Hawkins
to attribute this demoralisation thereto as inevitable; how much
more when mental lassitude is added to them, and when the in-
fuences already mentioned which tempt every working-man to
demoralisation, make themselves felt here too! There is no cause
for surprise, therefore, that in the manufacturing towns especially,
drunkenness and sexual excesses have reached the pitch which I
have already described.1

Further, the slavery in which the bourgeoisie holds the pro-
letariat chained, is nowhere more conspicuous than in the factory
system. Here ends all freedom in law and in fact. The operative
must be in the mill at half-past five in the morning; if he comes
a couple of minutes too late, he is fined; if he comes ten minutes too
late, he is not let in until breakfast is over, and a quarter of the
day’s wages is withheld, though he loses only two and one-half
hours’ work out of twelve. He must eat, drink, and sleep at
command. For satisfying the most imperative needs, he is vouch-
safed the least possible time absolutely required by them.
Whether his dwelling is a half-hour or a whole one removed from

1 Let us hear another competent judge: “If we consider the example
of the Irish in connection with the endless toil of the cotton operative
class, we shall wonder less at their terrible demoralisation. Continuous
exhausting toil, day after day, year after year, is not calculated to develop
the intellectual and moral capacities of the human being. The wearisome
routine of endless drudgery, in which the same mechanical process is ever
repeated, is like the torture of Sisyphus; the burden of toil, like the
rock, is ever falling back upon the worn-out drudge. The mind attains
neither knowledge nor the power of thought from the eternal employment
of the same muscules. The intellect dozes off in dull idleness, but the
carcerated part of our nature reaches a luxuriant development. To sustain
a human being to such work is to cultivate the animal quality in him. He
grows indifferent, he scorres the impulses and customs which distinguish
his kind. He neglects the conveniences and finer pleasures of life, lives in
filthy poverty with scanty nourishment, and squanders the rest of his earn-
ings in debauchery.”—Dr. J. Kay.

the factory does not concern his employer. The despotic bell
calls him from his bed, his breakfast, his dinner.

What a time he has of it, too, inside the factory! Here the
employer is absolute law-giver; he makes regulations at will,
changes and adds to his code at pleasure, and even, if he inserts
the crassest stuff, the courts say to the working-man: “You were
your own master, no one forced you to agree to such a contract
if you did not wish to; but now, when you have freely entered
into it, you must be bound by it.” And so the working-man only
gets into the bargain the mockery of the Justice of the Peace who
is a bourgeoisie himself, and of the law which is made by the
bourgeoisie. Such decisions have been given often enough. In
October, 1844, the operatives of Kennedy’s mill, in Manchester
struck. Kennedy prosecuted them on the strength of a regula-
tion placed on the mill, that at no time more than two opera-
tives in one room may quit work at once. And the court decided
in his favour, giving the working-men the explanation cited
above.1 And such rules as these usually are! For instance:
1. The doors are closed ten minutes after work begins, and there-
after no one is admitted until the breakfast hour; whoever is
absent during this time forfeits 8d. per loom. 2. Every power-
loom weaver detected absenting himself at another time, while
the machinery is in motion, forfeits for each hour and each loom,
8d. Every person who leaves the room during working-hours,
without obtaining permission from the overlooker, forfeits 8d.
3. Weavers who fail to supply themselves with scissors forfeit, per
day, 1d. 4. All broken shuttles, brushes, oil-cans, wheels, win
dow panes, etc., must be paid for by the weaver. 5. No weaver
to stop work without giving a week’s notice. The manufacturer
may dismiss any employee without notice for bad work or im-
proper behaviour. 6. Every operative detected speaking to an-
other, singing or whistling, will be fined 6d.; for leaving his
place during working-hours, 6d.2 Another copy of factory regu-
lations lies before me, according to which every operative who

1 Manchester Guardian, October 30th.
2 “Scabborn Facts,” p. 9 et seq.
comes three minutes too late, forfeits the wages for a quarter of an hour, and every one who comes twenty minutes too late, for a quarter of a day. Every one who remains absent until breakfast forfeits a shilling on Monday, and sixpence every other day of the week, etc., etc. This last is the regulation of the Phoenix Works in Jersey Street, Manchester. It may be said that such rules are necessary in a great, complicated factory, in order to insure the harmonious working of the different parts; it may be asserted that such a severe discipline is as necessary here as in an army. This may be so, but what sort of a social order is it which cannot be maintained without such shameful tyranny? Either the end sanctifies the means, or the inference of the badness of the end from the badness of the means is justified. Every one who has served as a soldier knows what it is to be subjected even for a short time to military discipline. But these operatives are condemned from their ninth year to their death to live under the sword, physically and mentally. They are worse slaves than the negroes in America, for they are more sharply watched, and yet it is demanded of them that they shall live like human beings, shall think and feel like men! Verily, this they can do only under glowing hatred towards their oppressors, and towards that order of things which place them in such a position, which degrades them to machines. But it is far more shameful yet, that according to the universal testimony of the operatives, numbers of manufacturers collect the fines imposed upon the operatives with the most heartless severity, and for the purpose of piling up extra profits out of the farthings thus extorted from the impoverished proletarians. Leach asserts, too, that the operatives often find the factory clock moved forward a quarter of an hour and the doors shut, while the clerk moves about with the fines-book inside, noting the many names of the absentees. Leach claims to have counted fifty-five operatives thus shut out, standing before a factory, whose clock was a quarter of an hour slower than the town clocks at night, and a quarter of an hour faster in the morning. The Factory Report relates similar facts. In one factory the clock was set back during working-hours, so that the operatives worked overtime without extra pay; in another, a whole quarter of an hour's overtime was worked; in a third, there were two clocks, an ordinary one and a machine clock, which registered the revolutions of the main shaft; if the machinery went slowly, working-hours were measured by the machine clock until the number of revolutions due in twelve hours was reached; if work went well, so that the number was reached before the usual working-hours were ended, the operatives were forced to toil on to the end of the twelfth hour. The witness adds that he had known girls who had good work, and who had worked overtime, who, nevertheless, bestowed themselves to a life of prostitution rather than submit to this tyranny. 1 To return to the fines, Leach relates having repeatedly seen women in the last period of pregnancy fined 6d. for the offence of sitting down a moment to rest. Fines for bad work are wholly arbitrary; the goods are examined in the wareroom, and the supervisor charges the fines upon a list without even summoning the operative, who only learns that he has been fined when the over looker pays his wages, and the goods have perhaps been sold, or certainly been placed beyond his reach. Leach has in his possession such a fines list, ten feet long, and amounting to £35 17s. 10d. He relates that in the factory where this list was made, a new supervisor was dismissed for finding too little, and so bringing in five pounds too little weekly. 2 And I repeat that I know Leach to be a thoroughly trustworthy man incapable of a falsehood.

But the operative is his employer's slave in still other respects. If his wife or daughter finds favour in the eyes of the master, a command, a hint suffices, and she must place herself at his disposal. When the employer wishes to supply with signatures a petition in favour of bourgeois interests, he need only send it to his mill. If he wishes to decide a Parliamentary election, he sends his enfranchised operatives in rank and file to the polls, and they vote for the bourgeois candidate whether they will or no. If he desires a majority in a public meeting, he dismisses them half-an-hour earlier than usual, and secures them places close to the platform, where he can watch them to his satisfaction.

Two further arrangements contribute especially to force the operative under the dominion of the manufacturer; the Truck system and the Cottage system. The truck system, the payment of the operatives in goods, was formerly universal in England. The manufacturer opens a shop, “for the convenience of the operatives, and to protect them from the high prices of the petty dealers.” Here goods of all sorts are sold to them on credit; and to keep the operatives from going to the shops where they could get their goods more cheaply—the “Tommy shops” usually charging twenty-five to thirty per cent. more than others—wages are paid in requisitions on the shop instead of money. The general indignation against this infamous system led to the passage of the Truck Act in 1831, by which, for most employees, payment in truck orders was declared void and illegal, and was made punishable by fine; but, like most other English laws, this has been enforced only here and there. In the towns it is carried out comparatively efficiently; but in the country, the truck system, disguised or undisguised, flourishes. In the town of Leicester, too, it is very common. There lie before me nearly a dozen convictions for this offence, dating from the period between November, 1843, and June, 1844, and reported, in part, in the Manchester Guardian and, in part, in the Northern Star. The system is, of course, less openly carried on at present; wages are usually paid in cash, but the employer still has means enough at command to force him to purchase his wares in the truck shop and nowhere else. Hence it is difficult to combat the truck system, because it can now be carried on under cover of the law, provided only that the operative receives his wages in money. The Northern Star of April 27th, 1843, publishes a letter from an operative of Holmfirth, near Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, which refers to a manufacturer of the name of Bowers, as follows (retranslated from the German):

“It is very strange to think that the accused truck system should exist to such an extent as it does in Holmfirth, and nobody be found who has the pluck to make the manufacturer stop it. There are here a great many honest hand-weavers suffering through this damned system; here is one sample from a good many out of the noble-hearted Free Trade Clique. There is a manufacturer who has upon himself the curses of the whole district on account of his infamous conduct towards his poor weavers; if they have got a piece ready which comes to 34 or 36 shillings, he gives them 20s. in money and the rest in cloth or goods, and 40 to 50 per cent. dearer than at the other shops, and often enough the goods are rotten into the bargain. But, what says the Free Trade Mercury, the Leeds Mercury? They are not bound to take them; they can please themselves. Oh, yes, but they must take them or else starve. If they ask for another 20s. in money, they must wait eight or fourteen days for a warp; but if they take the 20s. and the goods, then there is always a warp ready for them. And that is Free Trade. Lord Brougham said we ought to put by something in our young days, so that we need not go to the parish when we are old. Well, are we to put by the rotten goods? If this did not come from a lord, one would say his brains were as rotten as the goods that our work is paid in. When the unstamped papers came out “illegally,” there was a lot of them to report it to the police in Holmfirth, the Blythes, the Edwards, etc.; but where are they now? But this is different. Our truck manufacturer belongs to the placid Free Trade lot; he goes to church twice every Sunday, and repeats devotedly after the parson: ‘We have left undone the things we ought to have done, and we have done the things we ought not to have done, and there is no good in us; but, good Lord, deliver us.’ Yes, deliver us till tomorrow, and we will pay our weavers again in rotten goods.”

The Cottage system looks much more innocent and arose in a much more harmless way, though it has the same enslaving influence upon the employee. In the neighbourhood of the mills in the country, there is often a lack of dwelling accommodation for the operatives. The manufacturer is frequently obliged to build such dwellings and does so gladly, as they yield great advantages, besides the interest upon the capital invested. If any owner of working-men’s dwellings averages about six per cent. on his invested capital, it is safe to calculate that the manufacturer’s cottages yield twice this rate; for so long as his factory does not stand, perfectly idle he is sure of occupants, and of occupants who pay punctually. He is therefore spared the two chief disadvantages under which other house-owners labour; his cottages never stand
empty, and he runs no risk. But the rent of the cottages is as high as though these disadvantages were in full force, and by obtaining the same rent as the ordinary house-owner, the manufacturer, at cost of the operatives, makes a brilliant investment at twelve to fourteen per cent. For it is clearly unjust that he should make twice as much profit as other competing houseowners, who at the same time are excluded from competing with him. But it implies a double wrong, when he draws his fixed profit from the pockets of the non-possessing class, which must consider the expenditure of every penny. He is used to that, however, he whose whole wealth is gained at the cost of his employees. But this injustice becomes an infamy when the manufacturer, as often happens, forces his operatives, who must occupy his houses on pain of dismissal, to pay a higher rent than the ordinary one, or even to pay rent for houses in which they do not live! The Halifax Guardian, quoted by the Liberal Sun, asserts that hundreds of operatives in Ashton-under-Lyne, Oldham, and Rochdale, etc., are forced by their employers to pay house-rent whether they occupy the house or not.\(^1\) The cottage system is universal in the country districts; it has created whole villages, and the manufacturer usually has little or no competition against his houses, so that he can fix his price regardless of any market-rate, indeed at his pleasure. And what power does the cottage system give the employer over his operatives in disagreements between master and men? If the latter strike, he need only give them notice to quit his premises, and the notice need only be a week; after that time the operative is not only without bread but without a shelter, a vagabond at the mercy of the law which sends him, without fail, to the treadmill.

Such is the factory system sketched as fully as my space permits, and with as little partisan spirit as the heroic deeds of the bourgeoisie against the defenceless workers permit—deeds towards which it is impossible to remain indifferent, towards which indifference were a crime. Let us compare the condition of the free Englishman of 1845 with the Saxon serf under the lash of

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\(^1\) *Sun*, a London daily; end of November, 1844.
honest; that of the other cunning, sly, disguised, deceitfully concealed from himself and every one else, a hypocritical servitude worse than the old. The philanthropic Tories were right when they gave the operatives the name white slaves. But the hypocritical disguised slavery recognises the right to freedom, at least in outward form; bows before a freedom-loving public opinion, and herein lies the historic progress as compared with the old servitude, that the principle of freedom is affirmed, and the oppressed will one day see to it that this principle is carried out.1

1 I have neither time nor space to deal in detail with the replies of the manufacturers to the charges made against them for twelve years past. These men will not learn because their supposed interest blinds them. As, moreover, many of their objections have been met in the foregoing, the following is all that it is necessary for me to add:

You come to Manchester, you wish to make yourself acquainted with the state of affairs in England. You naturally have good introductions to respectable people. You drop a remark or two as to the condition of the workers. You are made acquainted with a couple of the first Liberal manufacturers, Robert Hyde Greg, perhaps, Edmund Ashworth, Thomas Ashton, or others. They are told of your wishes. The manufacturer understands you, knows what he has to do. He accompanies you to his factory in the country; Mr. Greg to Quarrybank in Chester, Mr. Ashworth to Totton near Bolton, Mr. Ashton to Hyde. He leads you through a superb, admirably arranged building, perhaps supplied with ventilators, he calls your attention to the lofty, airy rooms, the fine machinery, here and there a healthy-looking operative. He gives you an excellent lunch, and proposes to you to visit the operatives' homes; he conducts you to the cottages, which lock pew, clean and neat, and goes with you into this one and that one, naturally only to over-lookers, mechanics, etc., so that you may see “families who live wholly from the factory.” Among other families you might find that only wife and children work, and the husband darn stockings. The presence of the employer keeps you from asking inquisitive questions; you find every one well-paid, comfortable, comparatively healthy by reason of the country air; you begin to be converted from your exaggerated ideas of misery and starvation. But, that the cottage system makes slaves of the operatives, that there may be a truck shop in the neighbourhood, that the people hate the manufacturer, this they do not point out to you, because he is present. He has built a school, church, reading-room, etc. That he uses the school to train children to submission, that he tolerates in the reading-room such prints only as represent the interests of the bourgeoisie, that he disciplines his employees if they read Chartist or Socialist papers or books, this is all concealed from you. You see an easy, patriarchal relation, you see the life of the over-lookers, you see what the bourgeoisie promises the workers if they become its slaves, mentally and morally. This “country manufacture” has always been what the employers like to show, because in it the disadvantages of the factory system, especially from the point of view of health, are, in part, done away with by the free air and surroundings, and because the patrician servitude of the workers can here be longest maintained. Dr. Trelley is still the best upon the theme. But woe to the operatives to whom it occurs to think for themselves and become Chartists! For them the paternal affection of the manufacturer comes to a sudden end. Further, if you should wish to be accompanied through the working people’s quarters of Manchester, if you should desire to see the development of the factory system in a factory town, you may wait long before these rich bourgeois will help you! These gentlemen do not know in what condition their employees are nor what they want, and they dare not know things which would make them uneasy or even oblige them to act in opposition to their own interests. But, fortunately, that is of no consequence; what the working-men have to carry out, they carry out for themselves.
THE REMAINING BRANCHES OF INDUSTRY.

We were compelled to deal with the factory system somewhat at length, as it is an entirely novel creation of the industrial period; we shall be able to treat the other workers the more briefly, because what has been said either of the industrial proletariat in general, or of the factory system in particular, will wholly, or in part, apply to them. We shall, therefore, merely have to record how far the factory system has succeeded in forcing its way into each branch of industry, and what other peculiarities these may reveal.

The four branches comprised under the Factory Act are engaged in the production of clothing stuffs. We shall do best if we deal next with those workers who receive their materials from these factories; and, first of all, with the stocking weavers of Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester. Touching these workers, the Children's Employment Commission reports that the long working-hours, imposed by low wages, with a sedentary life and the strain upon the eyes involved in the nature of the employment, usually enfeeble the whole frame, and especially the eyes. Work at night is impossible without a very powerful light produced by concentrating the rays of the lamp, making them pass through glass globes, which is most injurious to the sight. At forty years of age, nearly all wear spectacles. The children employed at spooling and hemming usually suffer grave injuries to the health and constitution. They work from the sixth, seventh, or eighth year ten to twelve hours daily in small, close rooms. It is not uncommon for them to faint at their work, to become too feeble for the most ordinary household occupation, and so near-sighted as to be obliged to wear glasses during child-

hood. Many were found by the commissioners to exhibit all the symptoms of a scrofulous constitution, and the manufacturers usually refuse to employ girls who have worked in this way as being too weak. The condition of these children is characterised as "a disgrace to a Christian country," and the wish expressed for legislative interference. The Factory Report adds that the stocking weavers are the worst paid workers in Leicester, earning six, or with great effort, seven shillings a week, for sixteen to eighteen hours' daily work. Formerly they earned twenty to twenty-one shillings, but the introduction of enlarged frames has ruined their business; the great majority still work with old, small, single frames, and compete with difficulty with the progress of machinery. Here, too, every progress is a disadvantage for the workers. Nevertheless, Commissioner Power speaks of the pride of the stocking weavers that they are free, and had no factory ball to measure out the time for their eating, sleeping, and working. Their position to-day is no better than in 1833, when the Factory Commission made the foregoing statements, the competition of the Saxon stocking weavers, who have scarcely anything to eat, takes care of that. This competition is too strong for the English in nearly all foreign markets, and for the lower qualities of goods even in the English market. It must be a source of rejoicing for the patriotic German stocking weaver that his starvation wages force his English brother to starve too! And, verily, will he not starve on, proud and happy, for the greater glory of German industry, since the honour of the Fatherland demands that his table should be bare, his dish half-empty? Ah! it is a noble thing this competition, this "race of the nations." In the Morning Chronicle, another Liberal sheet, the organ of the bourgeois par excellence, there were published some letters from a stocking weaver in Hinkley, describing the condition of his fellow-workers. Among other things, he reports 50 families, 321 persons, who were supported by 109 frames; each frame yielded on an average 5½ shillings; each family earned an average of 11s. 4d. weekly. Out of this there was required for house rent, frame rent, fuel,
The remaining branches of industry.

The manufacture of lace is greatly complicated by a rigid division of labour, and embraces a multitude of branches. The yarn is first spoiled by girls fourteen years of age and upwards, winders; then the spools are set up on the frames by boys, eight years old and upwards, threaders, who pass the thread through fine openings, of which each machine has an average of 1,800, and bring it towards its destination; then the weaver weaves the lace which comes out of the machine like a broad piece of cloth and is taken apart by very little children who draw out the connecting threads. This is called running or drawing lace, and the children themselves lace-runners. The lace is then made ready for sale. The winders, like the threaders, have no specified working-time, being called upon whenever the spools on a frame are empty, and are liable, since the weavers work at night, to be required at any time in the factory or work-room. This irregularity, the frequent night-work, the disorderly way of living consequent upon it, engender a multitude of physical and moral ills, especially early and unbridled sexual licence, upon which point all witnesses are unanimous. The work is very bad for the eyes, and although a permanent injury in the case of the threaders is not universally observable, inflammations of the eye, pain, tears, and momentary uncertainty of vision during the act of threading are engendered. For the winders, however, it is certain that their work seriously affects the eye, and produces, besides the frequent inflammations of the cornea, many cases of amaurosis and cataract. The work of the weavers themselves is very difficult, as the frames have constantly been made wider, until those now in use are almost all worked by three men in turn, each working eight hours, and the frame being kept in use the whole twenty-four. Hence it is that the winders and threaders are so often called upon during the night, and must work to prevent the frame from standing idle. The filling in of 1,800 openings with thread occupies three children at least two hours. Many frames are moved by steam-power, and the work of men thus superseded; and, as the Children’s Employment Commission’s Report mentions only lace factories to which the children are summoned, it seems to follow either that the work of the weavers has been removed to great factory rooms of late, or that steam-weaving has become pretty general; a forward movement of the factory system in either case. Most wholesome of all is the work of the runners, who are usually children of seven, and even of five and four, years old. Commissioner Grainger actually found one child of two years old employed at this work. Following a thread which is to be withdrawn by a needle from an in-