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The Church and the Poor.

A SERIES OF HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

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XIV.

THE RISE OF COLLECTIVISM.

IN this chapter I propose to deal with the work of the so-called Christian Socialists, who, under the leadership of Professor Maurice, inaugurated a movement whose effects are not only still with us, but are growing in both strength and in comprehensiveness of influence year by year. The history of the movement has been told so often and so fully,¹ that I shall not attempt to retell it. I prefer to deal rather with the causes which led to it, the principles which inspired it, and the chief results which issued from it.

In the two previous chapters I have shown that in the thirties and forties the condition of the poor had become worse and worse. During these years they "were passing through one of the most terrible experiences of all their long unhappy history"; they had been reduced to "a condition of penury and despair." In 1840 Lord John Russell stated in the House of Commons that the people of the British Isles were "in a worse condition than the negroes in the West Indies"; and Dr. Arnold wrote to Carlyle that he believed that "the state of society in England was never yet paralleled in history."² Doubt-

¹ *E.g.*, in "The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice," two volumes, by his son; also in Charles Kingsley's "Life"; in Kaufmann's "Christian Socialism," and in his "Socialism and Modern Thought"; also in a lecture (appended to his "Social Development under Christian Influence") upon "The Christian Socialist Movement and Co-operation." The best short account of F. D. Maurice is in the "Leaders of the Church" series, by Mr. C. F. G. Masterman.

² A graphic picture of the period will be found in Mr. Masterman's chapter on "The Shaking of the Earth," in his life of Maurice; also in "The Hungry Forties" (published by Fisher Unwin).

less, as I have already shown, there was more than one cause for this terrible condition of things ; but however many the causes may have been, no one can, I think, deny that among them that of an absolutely unrestricted competition, coupled with, or perhaps rather as part of the issues of, the doctrine of *laissez faire*, pushed to its extremest limits, was the chiefest. Though, no doubt, to some extent unconsciously, yet none the less truly, men had actually become cannibals ; they were living off each other—or, rather, the strong were engaged in devouring the weak. If ever the necessity of right social principles, or the inevitable evil result of wrong social principles, was clearly shown, it was so at this time. The necessity of being governed by self-interest, the right of absolutely unrestricted competition, and the non-interference of the State on behalf of individuals or certain classes, had become accepted as practically axiomatic rules of conduct. For at least three-quarters of a century men had been governed by, or had worked according to, these principles ; the condition of the workers in 1848 was the inevitable issue.

It was against these principles, at that time so generally accepted, that Maurice and his co-workers vehemently protested. They proclaimed them to be absolutely false. In season and out they preached and taught and wrote and worked against them. But before stating Maurice's convictions, which I shall try to do, as far as possible, in his own words, one or two points must be noticed. Maurice came to his task with a rich equipment. He was no longer young, for in 1848 he was forty-three years of age¹ ; he was well read in theology, in philosophy, and in history ; he was not only a student, but also a hard, if not always a clear, thinker. Then the subjects upon which he now wrote had long been seething in his mind. Twenty years before he had been a member of a debating society founded by the Owenites² ; there he must have been early "brought into acquaintance with the nature of the discussion between the Co-operators and

¹ Bishop Westcott was sixty when he wrote his "Social Aspects of Christianity," and Ruskin was forty-four when he published "Munera Pulveris."

² "Life of Maurice," vol. i., pp. 75 *et seq.*

those who specially called themselves political economists.”¹ The advocates of competition and *laissez faire* were not only strong individualists; they were also strong utilitarians. Maurice, on the contrary, went for his inspiration to the first principles of theology.² This is the real key to all his teaching and all his work. It was in his Bible classes and through his sermons that he inspired his followers. He brings every conviction, indeed every opinion, to this test: Is it true to the primal verities of the Christian revelation? Of the Holy Trinity he writes: “If I have any work in the world, it is to bear witness of this Name . . . as the underground of all fellowship among men.”³ And again: “The preaching of the Trinity in its fulness will, I conceive, be the everlasting Gospel to the nations, which will involve the overthrow of the Babel polity and the brutal tyrannies as well as the foul superstitions of the earth.”⁴ Maurice believed and taught others to believe in a Heavenly Father—“a Father actually,” whose Fatherhood expressed “an actual relation to us,” not merely in “a Father about Whom we read in a book,” but “One who is always near our spirits.” He believed that “the Son is of one substance with the Father,” and that “His mind is the perfect expression of the Father’s mind”; also that “Christ the Divine Man is the Trustee Himself and the Source of trust in all the race”; that “Christ’s trust in the Father is the sign and witness of His Divine nature.” He asserts that “the belief that the Son of God has interfered for His creatures and has grappled with their sin and death, is the one protection of nations and men against sloth, effeminacy, baseness, tyranny”;⁵ also that “a finished reconciliation and atonement is the one answer to the scheme of men for making atonement; if you part with it, all superstitions, all Moloch cruelties will reproduce themselves.”⁶ He bids us remember that “the Son went with

¹ “Life of Maurice,” vol. i., p. 76.

² There is an excellent explanation of Maurice’s teaching in Storr’s “Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century,” pp. 340 *et seq.*

³ “Life of Maurice,” vol. ii., p. 388.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

the Father, fulfilling His will . . . we can but come . . . asking to have the Spirit of Sacrifice, and that that Spirit, Who is within us, convincing us of righteousness, of judgment, may dwell in us and quicken us to all the good works which God has prepared for us to walk in."¹ Maurice further believed in a Holy Spirit—"a universal Spirit working in others as well as ourselves, One who must have proceeded from the Father, but Who leads us not directly to the Father, but to One Who has come to redeem us . . . and perceiving in Christ that He is the infinite and eternal Love, we are certain that the Spirit which worketh in us, the Spirit of Love, is the eternal bond of unity between the Father and the Son, as He is between us on earth."²

Maurice was an intense "Realist" in the sense in which the term is applied to one section of the Schoolmen or Medieval philosophers;³ he confidently believed in the principle of *universalia ante rem*. To him the lesson which the true scientific worker has been learning from physical nature was true of the whole universe, and especially true in those spheres which are defined as spiritual, moral, social. He believed that all the troubles which he saw around him were due to men following their own man-made ideas, to men having set up their own principles and theories and laws and rules and customs without first asking: What are *God's* laws? What does God's revelation of Himself (and so of His Will) in Christ, and through the Holy Spirit, say to us? This teaching is especially clear in his "Sermons on the Lord's Prayer," preached during the troublous spring of 1848. The sermon upon "Thy Kingdom Come," in particular, is full of it. There he speaks of the persistency, in all ages and under all conditions, of the belief "that there will be, some time or other, a better order in all our relations to each other and in all the circumstances which affect us here on this planet."⁴ Also he speaks of those who "noticing the present distractions of the world are suggesting how

¹ "Life of Maurice," vol. ii., p. 394.

² *Ibid.*, p. 350.

³ Trench, "Medieval Church History," pp. 271 *et seq.* Maurice was, of course, a Platonist.

⁴ P. 304.

these may be removed. All seem to assume that the constitution of things is evil ; not that we are evil in departing from it.”¹ What the religious teachers of the day ought to have said to the people was : “ There has been a holy blessed order among you, which you have been darkening, confounding, hiding from men, by your sins and selfishness ; but which must and will re-assert itself, in spite of you and all that resist it.”²

To put it in another way, what Maurice saw was that people were seeking to justify their own methods and plans without first asking God what His method was, without studying the method revealed in Jesus Christ, and then obeying that. This conviction caused Maurice to say of himself : “ I desire to labour in all ways, being most careful to choose none by self-will or from mere calculations of expediency, and to avoid none which God points out. . . . I believe whoever enters on this path . . . must have no confidence in himself, but must cultivate entire confidence in God and in the certainty of His purposes.”³ He attacked the generally received principle of unlimited competition, not from a simply humanitarian point of view, not merely because of the cruelties it perpetrated upon tens of thousands of more or less defenceless men and women, but because he saw it was contrary to God’s nature and God’s will, as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and because it severed men and set them against each other, and therefore was also contrary to the teaching and power of a holy uniting Spirit. “ Competition,” he writes to Charles Kingsley, “ is put forth as the law of the universe. That is a lie. The time has come for us to declare that it is a lie by word and deed. I see no way but associating for work and not for strikes. I do not say or think we feel that the relation of employer and employed is not a true relation. I do not determine that wages may not be a righteous mode of expressing that relation. But at present it is clear that this relation is destroyed, that the payment of wages is nothing but a deception. . . . God’s voice has gone forth clearly bidding us come forward to fight against

¹ “ Sermons on the Lord’s Prayer,” p. 311.

² *Ibid.*, p. 312.

³ “ Life of Maurice,” vol. ii., p. 10.

the present state of things ; to call men to repentance first of all, but then also, as it seems to me, to give them an opportunity of showing their repentance and bringing forth fruits worthy of it."¹

Maurice and his followers called themselves Christian Socialists, they named the second² paper which they published the *Christian Socialist*, and they issued a series of "Tracts on Christian Socialism." It was not that the name was applied to them by others. But as few terms have been used with a wider, indeed a looser, significance than "Socialist" and "Socialism," it will be well to examine what Maurice himself understood by them. In a letter to Ludlow he writes: "'Tracts on Christian Socialism' is, it seems to me, the only title which will define our object, and will commit us at once to the conflict we must engage in sooner or later with the unsocial Christians and the unchristian Socialists. It is a great thing not to leave people to poke out our object and proclaim it with infinite triumph: 'Why, you are Socialists in disguise!' 'In disguise—not a bit of it. There it is staring you in the face upon the title-page.'"³ It was he adds to his imaginary interlocutor: "Did we not profess that our intended something was quite different to what your Owenish lecturers meant?"⁴ This last sentence is of very great importance, for it clearly implies that Maurice saw that by the term "Christian Socialism" the principles and objects of himself and his followers would be misunderstood. Unfortunately, this misunderstanding has continued to the present day. It was because Maurice felt that the term "Christian Socialist" so exactly described the convictions and the aims of himself and his colleagues that he was not prepared to give it up. What he wished it to imply he has made quite clear. In a letter to Daniel Macmillan he writes: "Our great desire is to Christianize Socialism."⁵ Then in a pamphlet he states: "The watchword of the Socialist is co-operation; the watchword of the Anti-socialist is competition. Anyone who recognizes the

¹ "Life of Maurice," vol. ii., p. 32. ² The first was "Politics for the People."

³ "Life of Maurice," vol. ii., p. 36.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

principle of co-operation as a stronger and truer principle than that of competition has a right to the honour or the disgrace of being called a Christian Socialist." That by Socialism Maurice did not mean compulsory Socialism—*i.e.*, that the State should take over the material and instruments of production—is abundantly clear. "Schemes for reducing all things to a common stock" were to him only attempts "for establishing a fellowship upon a law of mutual selfishness."¹ In a letter to Ludlow he writes: "The State, I think, cannot be communist; never will be; never ought to be. It is by nature and law conservative of individual rights, individual possessions."² In his fifth sermon upon the Lord's Prayer, Maurice, in reference to the so-called communism of the early Church, says: "The selling of houses and lands was only one exhibition of a state of mind—an exhibition never enforced, as St. Peter told Ananias. But the principle implied in the words, 'No man said that which he had was his own' is the principle of the Church in all ages; its members stand while they confess this principle, they fall from her communion when they deny it. Property is holy: so speaks the *Law*, and the *Church* does not deny the assertion, but ratifies it. Only she must proclaim this other truth or perish. Beneath all distinctions of property and of rank lie the obligations of a common Creation, Redemption, Humanity; and these are not mere ultimate obligations to be confessed when others are fulfilled. They are not vague abstractions, which cannot quite be denied, but which have no direct bearing upon our daily existence; they are primary, eternal bonds, upon which all others depend."³

I have dwelt at considerable length upon the "Christian-social" teaching of Maurice, because it is essential that we should understand it, if we are to have a clear grasp of the 'Christian-social Movement,' of which he was the actual inspirer, which is still with us, and indeed, as I have already said, is growing in influence every year. I have said nothing of

¹ "The Prayer-Book and the Lord's Prayer," p. 341.

² "Life of Maurice," vol. ii., p. 8.

³ "The Prayer Book," p. 340.

his coadjutors—Kingsley, Ludlow, Vansittart Neale, Thomas Hughes, and others—not because their work was unimportant, but because when we have once grasped Maurice's principles we can understand that which each and all were striving to achieve. Charles Kingsley's celebrated placard addressed "To the Workmen of England,"¹ was doubtless written in his own particular style; the words were his, but the principles asserted were those of Maurice. Kingsley's plain declaration of distrust in any permanent benefit from mere measures of Parliamentary reform is a clear echo of Maurice's own teaching. His final assertion that freedom will be brought about by Almighty God and Jesus Christ, and that there can be no true industry without the fear of God, is exactly what Maurice was always proclaiming.

Judged by what the world terms "practical results," so far as getting the workmen (at any rate as producers) to combine together successfully, the "Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations" was a complete failure.² First one and then another of the little societies of co-operative producers, promoted, and to a great extent financed, by Maurice and his friends, came to grief.³ The reasons for these failures were doubtless many, but certainly the chief one was that stated by the promoters in their final report—namely, the selfishness of the members. These quarrelled among themselves; they failed to look sufficiently forward, and to take a broad and Christian view of their work. But though the movement failed in its immediate results, it had far-reaching consequences. Among these was the passing of the "Industrial and Provident Partnerships Bill," which became law in the summer of 1852.⁴ But though the co-operative movement—especially as regards production—was a failure in London and in the South of England,

¹ Charles Kingsley's "Life," p. 63.

² Kingsley's "Life," p. 209; Kaufmann, "Christian Socialism," p. 75.

³ Mrs. Webb's "The Co-operative Movement," pp. 122 *et seq.* That the "Christian Socialists" were not true Socialists see Mrs. Webb, *op. cit.*, pp. 154 *et seq.*

⁴ "Life of Maurice," vol. ii., p. 121.

in the North, especially in Lancashire and Yorkshire, it took strong root and has grown and flourished ever since. In commending the movement to the shrewd industrial workers of the North, the followers of Maurice, particularly Ludlow, Hughes, and Neale, did yeoman service. Mrs. Webb believes that the Lancashire co-operators actually borrowed "the individualist ideal of self-employment" from these "Christian Socialists."¹ If a proof were needed of how little Maurice and his followers were either "Socialists" or "Socialistic" in the more strict, and now generally accepted, interpretation of these terms, it could be found in her indictment that "an industrial organization which substitutes for one profit-maker many profit-makers is not a step forward in the moralization of trade."² She admits, indeed praises highly, "the ethical sentiment of the highest order," which inspired the promoters; but at the same time she bids us remember that the working men who accepted their services and their capital were probably guided by a desire—a perfectly legitimate one—to better themselves, which, of course, is not in accordance with the true socialistic ideal, which would abolish all profit for individual gain.

In the warfare which was waged against the political economy then generally accepted—that is, against the principle of practically unlimited competition, one name must not be forgotten. John Ruskin had corresponded with Maurice, in connection with his "Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds," as early as 1851.³ In 1854, when Maurice founded the Working Men's College, Ruskin, who had already been writing articles on education, taxation, and other social subjects, offered to undertake the teaching of the drawing classes, and to these classes for some time he devoted himself most assiduously.⁴ I do not wish to lay stress upon Maurice's influence on Ruskin, though to deny that this existed would be not only unwise, but extremely difficult to prove. In 1857 Ruskin gave some

¹ Mrs. Webb, "The Co-operative Movement," pp. 171 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 155.

³ Collingwood, "Life of John Ruskin," p. 124.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

lectures in Manchester on "The Political Economy of Art." In these lectures he dealt with the government of a State, which, he asserted, should not be content with *laissez faire*, but should promote everything which was for the true interests of the State.¹ This proclamation of the paternal function of Government, of the right of the State to a wide range of interference, was, of course, entirely contrary to the prevailing tendency of thought at that time. From about 1860 Ruskin's faith in such experiments as the Working Men's College seemed to fail;² he began to feel that much more radical methods of reform were necessary if social welfare was to be realized.

After a period of solitude in Switzerland, passed in thinking out what these methods should be, he published "Unto this Last,"³ and, two years later, "Munera Pulveris." The preface to the first of these, in which he plainly states his purpose, contains suggestions which can only be described as socialistic—*e.g.*, "manufactories and workshops, entirely under Government regulation, for the production and sale of every necessary of life";⁴ he also advocates labour colonies, penal and otherwise, and old age pensions.⁵ Ruskin's Socialism, though in many respects extremely advanced, was, no more than that of Maurice, what usually goes under that name.⁶ His panacea for the evils he witnessed was far rather an ethical one than the promotion of any particular kind of social organization. He would interfere "no whit with private enterprise," and he believes that "if once we get a sufficient quantity of honesty in our captains, the organization of labour is easy, and will develop itself without quarrel or difficulty; but if we cannot get honesty in our captains, the organization of labour is for ever impossible."⁷ That Ruskin had already looked carefully into the existing condition of the workers is evident from his scathing criticism of Ricardo's definition of "the natural rate of wages," as that which will maintain the labourer. "Maintain him! yes, but

¹ Collingwood, "Life of John Ruskin," p. 170. ² *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³ In 1860.

⁴ P. xvii.

⁵ Pp. xviii, xx.

⁶ "Munera Pulveris," p. xxix.

⁷ "Unto this Last," pp. xv, xvi.

how?" asks Ruskin; "will you arrange their maintenance so as to kill them early—say at thirty or thirty-five on the average, including deaths of weakly or ill-fed children?—or so as to enable them to live out a natural life?"¹ In "Munera Pulveris," published in 1863, he exposes even more savagely what he considers to be the root-errors of the political economy then commonly accepted. He states, in the opening words of the book, that "the following pages contain, I believe, the first accurate analysis of the laws of Political Economy which has been published in England."² These words no doubt provoked many a smile in the followers of Adam Smith and Ricardo, but much that Ruskin had to say was not only entirely true, but was in desperate need of being said: such, for instance, as—"It is not the object of political economy to increase the numbers of a nation at the cost of common health or comfort; nor to increase indefinitely the comfort of individuals by sacrifice of surrounding lives, or possibilities of life."³ But it was in "Time and Tide" (published in 1867) that Ruskin gave the completest exposition of his views as to the nature of the ideal commonwealth. Into this teaching I must not enter, except to say that many of Ruskin's views, however much they were ridiculed when first he expressed them, are now widely accepted by those who have at heart the welfare of the poor. Where Ruskin is strongest, and where he is entirely right, is in his insistence upon ethical conditions. In the rules which should be laid down for the welfare of any society, Ruskin, like John Calvin, would go back to what he believed to be the revealed will of God, and consequently an irrefragable law. Where things were wrong it was because this law, or some part of it, had been either ignored or wilfully disobeyed. Speaking of "the true connection between wages and work," he states that it is essential "to determine, even approximately, the real quantity of the one, that can, according to the laws of God and Nature, be given for the other; for, rely on it, make what laws you like,

¹ "Unto this Last," p. 163.

² P. vii.

³ P. 3. [As Engels saw it being done in Manchester in 1844.]

that quantity only can you at last get.”¹ In the face of this teaching to deny that Ruskin was most strongly influenced by Maurice seems impossible; that he, in turn, had an immense influence upon Bishop Westcott appears equally certain. There is many a passage in Ruskin which expresses Maurice’s teaching; there are still more in Bishop Westcott’s later addresses which recall and accentuate lessons which Ruskin had been teaching twenty or thirty years before.

The period which stretches from 1848 to 1870 must be a deeply interesting one to those who are concerned in the welfare of the poor, because it was during these years that the principles of individualism, unlimited competition, and non-interference, or *laissez faire*, were attacked and finally undermined. The attack came from many sides. With the attack made by the “Christian Socialists,” who were undoubtedly aided by their literary ability, I have already dealt. The exceptional literary power of John Ruskin, also, found him an immense circle of readers, as it also did Charles Dickens, who, in novel after novel, with an extraordinary insight into human nature, exposed one existing abuse after another, and revealed to thousands what the actual conditions were in contiguity to which they were living. Another extremely strong attack came from the “humanitarians,” chief among whom were Southey, Oastler,² Michael Sadler, and, above all, Lord Shaftesbury.³ These men concentrated their efforts upon revealing the horrors and iniquities of the factory system as it then existed, and upon passing the various Factory Acts which should at least mitigate its evils. And they did not belong to the party of the Whigs or Liberals, which had been mainly instrumental in passing the Reform Bill of 1832, and the Poor Law Act of 1834. Actually they were high Tories opposed to such legislation, and who had fought against such measures

¹ “Time and Tide” (ed. 1906), pp. 15, 16.

² Author of “Slavery in Yorkshire.”

³ In “The Manchester Politician” Mr. Hertz notices four lines of revolt against the school of *laissez faire*: (1) “The Humanitarian”; (2) “The Labourer”; (3) “The Imperialist”; (4) “The Economic.” On the whole movement see Dicey, “Law and Opinion in England,” pp. 219 *et seq.*

as those removing disabilities from Roman Catholics. Lord Shaftesbury, in his private diaries, records how his bitterest opponents at that time were not the Tories, but Liberals like O'Connell, Gladstone, Bright, and Lord Brougham.¹ The student of recent social legislation and the prophet in regard to such legislation in the future may find useful food for thought in the fact that it was by men of undoubtedly Tory traditions that the first great steps in the promotion of Collectivist or Socialistic legislation, of which during the last forty years so much has been passed, were taken. That there was urgent need for such legislation no one who knows the facts can for a moment doubt. In a letter to Lord Shaftesbury, Southey writes: "Thousands of thousands will bless you for taking up the cause of these poor children [in the factories]. I do not believe that anything more inhuman than the system has ever disgraced human nature in any age or country. Was I not right in saying that Moloch was a more merciful fiend than Mammon? Death in the brazen arms of the Carthaginian idol was mercy to the slow waste of life in the factories."²

Another attack upon individualism came from what Professor Dicey terms the "Changed Attitude of the Working Classes." He shows that after the defeat of Chartism in 1848 the workmen "devoted their efforts to movements of which the object was social and not political";³ they directed their energies towards trade unionism, which "was a step in the direction of Collectivism"; for trade unionism implies collective bargaining, and puts restrictions upon individual freedom of contract. Strenuous efforts were made, and with gradual, if slow, success to alter the laws in favour of the right of workmen to combine. The workers pleaded for, and eventually won the right to bring, "the severest moral pressure to bear upon the action, and thus restrain the freedom of any workman who might be inclined to follow his own interest in defiance of union rules intended to

¹ Dicey, *op. cit.*, pp. 233 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 239. Actually they so far followed the advice of Kingsley and the "Christian Socialists."

promote the interest of all the workmen engaged in a particular trade.”¹

Two other influences at work during this period joined in the attack upon individualism. First, there was a growing sense of the value of combination in trade and commerce. The practice of combination in this sphere has, of course, in various directions grown enormously since the days we are considering, but the beginnings of it were then already at work.² Side by side with this we see various public bodies, fragments of the State, and popularly elected—*e.g.*, the municipalities—becoming in different ways traders for the benefit of the community which they represent. Also during this period we see another and striking interference by the State, both on behalf of, and in the management of, great trading concerns—*viz.*, the railways of the United Kingdom. When a railway company obtains from Parliament the right of compulsory purchase of land for the public convenience, the principle that ultimately the land belongs to the nation has met with at least a measure of recognition; and when a railway has to obtain from the same authority the right to make certain charges, we have another very strong instance of State interference.³

The second influence to which I refer was that to which the Reform Bills of 1868 and 1884 were undoubtedly due, and to which the Acts in which they issued gave an enormously increased power. The causes which brought about household suffrage were doubtless many—among them being the victory of the North in the War of Secession; but the chief reason for the Reform Acts of 1868⁴ and 1884⁵ was undoubtedly a deference to the wish of the working classes “who desired, though in a vague and indefinite manner, the attainment of the ideals of Socialism or Collectivism.”⁶

Of the history of the Poor Law between 1848 and 1870 there is nothing of outstanding importance to record. The old

¹ Dicey, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 244 *et. seq.*

³ Dicey, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

⁴ Passed by the Conservatives.

⁵ Which equalized the County franchise with that of the Boroughs.

⁶ Dicey, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

difficulties connected with Settlement and Removal were attacked, though never quite successfully, by more than one Act of Parliament. In 1861 an important Act¹ was passed in reference to "Union Rating," whereby certain burdens which fell heavily upon poor parishes were lightened by making these a common charge upon the Union. Another question which at this time began to claim serious attention was the appointment and payment of Poor Law medical officers—a subject which had certainly not met with the treatment due to it in the Act of 1834. Instead of a payment *per* case treated, it was decided in 1857² that medical officers "should be appointed for life, and should only cease to hold office upon their resignation, insanity, or other disqualification, or upon their removal by the Poor Law Board."³ Half their salaries were now paid by the State, and extra remuneration was given for extra services. The same subject was again raised in 1864, but a Committee appointed to consider it decided that there was no need for further regulations.⁴

Possibly the severest test to which the Poor Law was ever put was that occasioned by the Lancashire Cotton Famine of 1861 to 1863,⁵ which caused exceptional "abnormal" distress. At that time there were at least 440,000 persons employed in the trade, who were receiving some £11,500,000 a year in wages. The tremendous pressure put upon the Poor Law by the stoppage of the mills is shown by the fact that in February, 1862, the amount of pauperism in Ashton-under-Lyne, Glossop, and Preston, showed increases of 213 per cent., 300 per cent., and 320 per cent. respectively above the normal increases for that winter month. Under exceptional circumstances it is necessary to resort to exceptional measures, and during the famine two Acts were passed. By the first it was provided

¹ 24 and 25 Vict., c. 55; see Aschrott and Preston Thomas, "The English Poor Law," p. 59.

² By the "Medical Appointments Order" of May 25, 1857.

³ Aschrott and Preston Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 62.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Upon the Cotton Famine see "History of the English Poor Law," vol. iii. (Mackay), chap. xviii.

that when the poor rate in any parish in the three counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derby exceeded three shillings in the pound, the excess should be a Union charge; when it exceeded five shillings in the pound, the Poor Law Board might call upon other Unions in the county to make up the excess.¹ The second Act² was one to facilitate the execution of public works in certain manufacturing districts, etc. By this Act the Treasury was empowered to advance, out of the Consolidated Fund, sums in the aggregate not to exceed £1,200,000 to local bodies for the execution of permanent works. At that time in many of the manufacturing towns both the drainage and sewerage were imperfect, the water-supply was bad, and the roads were in an unsatisfactory state. It was thought that on these necessary works many of the unemployed, who were able-bodied, might be usefully employed. As a matter of experience only a very few operatives actually did find work under the provisions of the Act. The work was needed, and seems to have been well done, but as a means of relief the Act was not a success. It was hoped that the Act would provide employment for some 30,000 men, whereas, as a matter of fact, at the end of 1864, only some 3,978 factory operatives were working under its provisions.

It was during the period covered by this chapter that the Oxford Movement, the High Church revival, became widely influential. Of the leaders of this movement Bishop Westcott writes, "I cannot recall that they ever showed active sympathy with efforts for social reform."³ Broadly speaking, this assertion is probably correct; but at the same time it may create a false impression, because it ignores certain kinds of work which may come under the head of "social reform." If the Bishop meant that we do not find any of the earlier leaders of the High Church

¹ The Union Relief Aid Act, 1862: 25 and 26 Vict., cap. 160. This Act also gave power to the Guardians, under certain circumstances, to borrow.

² The Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863: 26 and 27 Vict., cap. 70; on this Act see Mackay, *op. cit.*, pp. 398 *et seq.*

³ "Lessons from Work," p. 24. [The whole context should be read.] Dicey, "Law and Opinion," p. 405, takes the same view as Bishop Westcott.

party taking a statesmanlike grasp of the evil social conditions then existing, endeavouring to penetrate into the causes of these, and then throwing themselves into a movement to remedy them, as Maurice, Kingsley, and their fellow-workers had done, his verdict is probably true. But if it implies, as it might be held to imply, that they were unconscious of, or made no effort to ameliorate, the sufferings of the poor, it is not true. What is true is, that we have to wait until the nineteenth century was drawing towards a close before we find the leaders in the High Church Movement taking that active and prominent part in social work which of recent years many of them so honourably and effectually have done.¹

¹ In a note appended to the statement quoted, Bishop Westcott writes: "The Essays in 'Lux Mundi' mark a new departure."

