

The Attitude of the Clergy to the Industrial Revolution
as reflected in the First and Second Statistical Accounts.

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CHAPTER ONE.

INTRODUCTORY.

Industrial Revolution destructive of existing social order: the cash nexus: idyllic relations depend on goodwill: large scale organisation tends to be impersonal: goodwill more difficult to maintain: indignation at the effects of Industrial Revolution on aesthetic and moral grounds: Ruskin: the Church's part in it: varied views of Lecky, Marx, Tom Johnston, Sydney and Beatrice Webb, Butterfield: the church's answer to criticisms -

(1) self-criticism, (2) criticism of other forms of Christianity: Calvin blamed for Capitalism: Industrial Revolution comes to Scotland in period of Calvinist decline: Weber's thesis: modified by Tawney: profound influence of Adam Smith: clerical emphasis on frugality and application helpful to economic development: Calvin blamed for socialism: ministers of the early industrial Scotland best described as "Tory Socialists": the church divided against itself: ecclesiastical issue diverts attention from social problems: the Statistical Accounts: Chalmers: their great social importance.

"The new class of great capitalistic employers made enormous fortunes, they took little or no part personally in the work of their factories, their hundreds of workmen were individually unknown to them; and as a consequence, the old relations between masters and men disappeared, and a "cash nexus" was substituted for the human tie. The workmen on their side resorted to combination, and Trades-Unions began a fight which looked as if it were between mortal enemies rather than joint producers." (1)

Few would be disposed to doubt the general accuracy of Toynbee's summary of the social changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution. So great a change in the working conditions, environment and habits of men and women as the machine (by its very nature) imposed, did not take place without a corresponding upheaval in social relations. The steam engine and the spinning jenny, so nearly contemporaneous in point of discovery, came with as great an impact upon the domestic industries as the invention of gunpowder upon the Medieval castle and the mail-clad knight. To agriculture and the relatively small scale industry, though developed commerce, of the middle 18th century there came a new and unsettling influence. It was to the social structure that had been built

(1) Toynbee, op.cit. 73.

up an explosive force. All the changes enumerated by Toynbee were set in motion. Population increased as never before and the previous distribution, mainly based upon agriculture, gave way to an overwhelming preponderance of town dwellers. This sudden upsurge of technological interest and advancement has continued with unabated zeal and shows no signs of flagging. With its social readjustments we are still concerned.

There is one caveat that may be uttered against Toynbee's summary. If it implies that the cash nexus was necessarily a worse relationship than feudal ties between one man and another, those who advocate the abolition of tied houses will disagree. In a sense the cash nexus was the ultimate development of mercantile relationships from the stage of barter; it was the crux of the movement from status to contract in human relations. Romanticism has provided us with the notion of idyllic relations existing between masters and men under the old clan system, or under the old estate system inherited from feudalism or in the industries small enough to be personally supervised and without the great concentrations characteristic of the age

of the machine. Idyllic relations can exist only on a basis of goodwill and this varies exceedingly between one man and another. Peasant revolts are a reminder that the lack of goodwill within a society is not peculiar to the industrial system.

What is true of the new situation is that the opportunities for personal relationship became less frequent between the different strata of society. Over-population weakened and often destroyed the sense of community. "There is a great danger," wrote a minister of Paisley in 1841, "of the man of affluence and power ceasing to care for the poor with whom he seldom or never comes in contact."⁽¹⁾ The large scale organisation facilitated by the machine tended to be impersonal. Coming itself to resemble the machine which so much ordered its life, it lost the respect that is only possible between persons. Employees were often so numerous that any resemblance of the master to the head of a family disappeared; ^{workers} ~~they~~ were looked upon as units and hands; in their relationship to their employer they were powerless except as a group. With masters, on the other hand, goodwill, where it existed, was diluted by the numbers with which it

(1) Burns. op.cit. 155.

had to deal. A group morality rather than an individual morality was imposed upon them; the head of a firm, in contrast to the small employer, could only be generous at the expense of his ^{partners or} shareholders. In short, confidence between the various ranks of society was far more difficult to maintain. In 1881 when Toynbee was writing, it may have seemed that horizontal divisions would replace the vertical cleavages formerly the occasion of so much conflict. They had certainly grown more prominent, though the economic issue has not yet proved to be the vital and paramount one on which men divide.

The indignation which the term Industrial Revolution conjures up in so many minds was initiated by Ruskin and, to some extent, on aesthetic grounds. As a boy of twelve he was taken to see one of its earliest triumphs, the Menai Bridge, which, he says, "I looked at with reverence for the mechanical skill of man - little thinking, poor innocent, what I should see the creature putting his skill to in the half-century to come."⁽¹⁾ But there are moral as well as aesthetic grounds for this indignation. The undoubtedly grave and much advertised horrors of the Revolution have continued to be the driving force of much political activity,

(1) Ruskin: Praeterita 132.

have contributed no little to the rise of Communism and hastened the formation of the Welfare State. They are responsible also for a guilt complex in many minds comparable to the guilt of war. There has been justifiable criticism of the evils of the factory system, of the "degrading dependence of workers upon capital"⁽¹⁾ and of the unfair distribution of national wealth. Butterfield expresses this criticism at its very mildest: "The Industrial Revolution and the rise of the Capitalist system are the best that Providence can do with human cupidity at certain stages of the story."⁽²⁾

It is our concern to examine the part played by the Church of Scotland in this great transformation, for we assume (without complete accuracy) that the clergy were the mouthpiece of the church. Here are some of the questions which we shall attempt to answer. How far and on what grounds did they welcome the machine and how was this related to the Bible, their supreme standard? How far did they foresee the results of the Revolution or try to mitigate them? What were their views on the new social order that the machine was partly responsible for shaping; on the most grievous

(1) Brunner: op.cit. 15.

(2) Butterfield: op.cit.34.

features of the factory system, its long hours of work, its child labour and unemployment; on the standard of living of the people; on the new political self consciousness of the masses; on the new form that the problem of poverty began to assume? In short, we are trying to discover where the church stood in relation to the broad developments that are now more clearly seen and how it influenced the currents of opinion that were then agitating the life of the country.

The part played by the church at large has been widely studied throughout the western world. It has been so differently estimated by writers of different shades of opinion that there is room to wonder how the same historical data could produce such a variety of praise and blame.

"My highest ambition," wrote Arnold of Rugby, "is to make my history the very reverse of Gibbon."⁽¹⁾ We take note therefore, first, of views on the church's social influence, the very reverse of each other, some as appreciative as others are hostile, for there are versions of the church's part in the Industrial Revolution as different as the Catholic and Protestant views of the Reformation.

(1) Strachey: op.cit. 211.

When Lecky made his famous Statement about Wesley saving England from revolution, he becomes representative of a climate of opinion not unfavourable to the church. For though it is possible to construe the effect of Wesley's preaching - the spreading of docility and the spirit of reconciliation among the masses - as nothing but an opiate, Lecky meant it for praise. And Lecky had no warm feelings for the church, since he viewed things from a kind of agnostic empiricism, absorbed as he was with the History of Rationalism and much criticised by the orthodox. Classic historians like Hume Brown and Trevelyan seem to have endeavoured to present as true an account as possible, on the evidence available, of the interaction of the various branches of the church with each other and with the state and society - and to present it with a maximum of interest.

The leading representative, on the other hand, of the hostile and destructive criticism of the church's influence on society, is Karl Marx. He does the church the honour of treating it as a whole with equal disfavour, though the Church of England may have received most scorn. "(It will more readily pardon attacks upon thirty-eight of its thirty-nine articles, than upon one thirty-ninth part of its income.)" ⁽¹⁾ Being at issue with Christianity itself,

(1) Marx: op.cit. 864.

however, he scarcely selects any branch of it for special blame. Perhaps, he reserves his most acid criticism for churchmen of whatever school, who were foremost in their political and economic interest. Thus Shaftesbury becomes the "Low-church Pope", Chalmers is styled "the arch parson", and the works of Malthus, though still exercising a profound influence, are "nothing more than a school-boyish, superficial and parsonic declamatory plagiarism."⁽¹⁾

Yet the climax of Marx's opposition is not to the earthen vessels but to what St. Paul considered the very treasure itself. The very substance of the faith is the real object of his attack. An ancient Greek lyric on the water-wheel is held to exhibit the greater healthiness of the Pagan outlook: "Lacking the gift of Christianity, it never occurred to them to advocate the enslavement of the masses in order to transform a few vulgar and half-educated upstarts into 'eminent cotton spinners', 'extensive sausage makers' and 'influential blacking dealers'."⁽²⁾ Here we have the characteristics not of the historian but of the propagandist; not of one attempting to judge dispassionately on the evidence available, but of the

(1) Marx: op.cit. 681.

(2) Marx: op.cit. 435.

advocate of a system; and for the church he holds no brief. It may have condoned some evils as a lamentable necessity; the libel that it instigated^{them}/has no ground at all.

Since Marx selects his incidents from the whole span of the Christian era with great shrewdness and dexterity, he cannot help finding the earthen vessel particularly earthen at different times and places. Such being the nature of the vessel he may find something to support but never to establish his thesis that the social influence of Christianity has been malign. To be true, he drew attention to much historical material hitherto neglected. But since truth itself is rejected as an absolute value it is doubtful how seriously his interpretation of history should be taken.

It is likely that men at large would have little noted nor long remembered so distorted a picture (or assortment of pictures) of past developments had they not formed the groundwork of a political philosophy containing within itself a new economic theory and an attractive social gospel. Yet the influence of this reading of history has been enormous and forms, it may be said, one of the great imponderables in the modern mind. There ought to be enough serious and comparatively objective history to counteract its influence.

But the sneer about religion being the opiate of the people has not lost its currency and many historians have shown the same bias. The modest Whig garments which history has been supposed to wear - and these have been varied enough - have been discarded, and with them much of the historical conscience as it had been previously understood. Scholarship has been scrupulous but not in the widest sense for it has been too partisan, too selective of past material for present purposes.

Thus Tom Johnston's "History of the Working Classes in Scotland", with all its sincerity, is more properly a history of their tribulations. It is a tale of man's inhumanity to man, as if nothing else had obtained and no beneficent influences had been at work; patriotism, religion and the considerable cultural achievements of the country are at a discount. Its failure to give a proper account of even the working classes, is notable in its somewhat casual treatment of the Irish who composed a quarter of Glasgow's population in 1845 - even before the mass migrations of the famine years.

J.E. Handley, the historian of the Irish in Scotland, describes it thus:⁽¹⁾ "The book covers the period from the

Middle Ages to the end of the nineteenth century and its pages contain a mass of facts about the economic and social evils of the past, collected under chapter headings illustrative of the writer's point of view, such as, "The Slavery Period", "Under the Capitalist Harrow", "The Great Massacre", "The Communist seeds of Salvation". Absorbed in his examination of the injustices inflicted down the centuries on the Scottish working people, Johnston can find place for no more than a passing reference to the Irish immigrants who formed such a large proportion of the industrial population of Scotland in the nineteenth century."⁽¹⁾

Thus in Johnston's work there is no hint of the decided gain in physical well-being that came to broad sections of the population within fifty years of the great inventions. Nor amidst his emphasis upon the sufferings of the downtrodden is there any suggestion that the vast majority enjoyed a higher standard of living than they had ever done before. To this fact the Statistical Accounts bear abundant testimony, supported by much evidence of better housing, clothes and food. To be true, there was a very dark side to industrial progress and this alone appears in Johnston's pages. When he says, for example, "if the middle-class cared nothing for

(1) Handley: op.cit. (Introduction)

the bodies of the broken workers, it looked well to their souls",⁽¹⁾ he draws an unnecessary inference from the appointment of poor-house chaplains. This is the drift of his interpretation of the church's part in social history and it is less impressive than if it had come from a more impartial politician or a more balanced historian.

In the same vein are the voluminous works of Sydney and Beatrice Webb. *The Liquidation of the Kulaks* bears a surface resemblance to the *Highland Clearances* but by no means the resemblance alleged in the following sentence: "We have no wish to minimise, still less to seek to justify, this ruthless expropriation and removal of the occupiers and cultivators who were stigmatised as Kulaks, any more than we do the equally ruthless expulsion, little more than a century ago, of the crofters from so much of the Scottish Highlands, or the economic ruin of so many small-holders that accompanied the Statutory enclosure of the English Commons."⁽²⁾ The writers do not seek to minimise the horrors of this liquidation but when they speak of the "equally ruthless expulsion" of the crofters they are in fact exaggerating the darkness and distorting the picture of

(1) Johnston: op.cit. 295

(2) Webb: op.cit. 571.

our Scottish past.

Thus when they try to estimate the influence of the church upon business and industry we find the historical imagination exercising itself in a direction precisely the opposite to that of Butterfield who writes as a churchman: "The capitalist employer or trader or financier usually supports the church and even attends its services; but his common sense and business experience forbid any attempt on his part to square his profit-making, which competition makes ruthless and even nationally destructive, with the denunciation of the prophets and the exhortations to mercy and compassion, and brotherly love toward all men, to which he piously listens on Sundays."⁽¹⁾

Butterfield, on the other hand, thinks this preaching by no means ineffectual but likely to be wholesome and productive of unmeasured blessings: "The ordinary historian when he comes, shall we say, to the year 1800, does not think to point out to his readers that in this year still as in so many previous years, thousands and thousands of priests and ministers were preaching the gospel week in week out, constantly reminding the farmer and the

(1) Webb: op.cit. 1139.

shopkeeper of charity and humility, persuading them for a moment to think about the great issues of life and inducing them to confess their sins. Yet this was a phenomenon calculated greatly to alter the texture of human history."⁽¹⁾

These, then, are two very diverse views of the influence of the church; the one that its preaching has been more or less beneficent in every realm of life, and the other that, in business, its role has been, at best, neutral, at worst, to provide a salve for consciences, a cloak for many a selfish and shady transaction,⁽²⁾ and a facade of respectability for a vicious system. When the same historical material is woven into such different patterns we may suspect that the predilections of the historians are coming to the surface. There are, indeed, two main versions of the part played by the church in our social history. And one of them has affinities with the views expressed in the Communist Manifesto: "Law, morality, religion are so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests."⁽³⁾

(1) Butterfield: op.cit. 131.

(2) Halevy. Quoted Morton. op.cit. 68.
"A twofold duty, to make a fortune
in business and to preach Christ
crucified" attributed to some Methodists.

(3) ~~Report on Communism~~ op.cit. 16.

What has been the answer of the church to the charges made against it? Is there foundation for the belief that it has betrayed some of the deepest interests of humanity? First, there has been, by churchmen, a healthy acknowledgement of their many failures in the trust that has been committed to them. King David furnishes the example of a man willing to hear and even to learn from what his enemy has to say: "Let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him."⁽¹⁾ There is in this, the humility which claims no perfection and acknowledges that God is not limited as to the means He may employ. He can use enemies of His church to point out its weakness. This attitude questions whether attacks are but a phase of the perennial conflict between light and darkness or whether darkness has found its way into the church itself, obscuring its primary witness and requiring to be expelled. The church ceases to be the church when it no longer confesses its sins. If it is a rather doubtful procedure to confess the sins of its fathers or to uncover their nakedness it is wholesome to study what seem to be their errors for the sake of avoiding them. Confronted with the assertion of betrayal, scrupulous disciples have asked, "Is it I?"⁽²⁾

(1) 2 Samuel 16.11.

(2) Matthew 26.22.

This first reaction can be seen in the frank admission of past failure by the Church of Scotland's Commission on Communism: "Churchmen today would do well to realise that the failure of the Church of an earlier day to bring the full weight of Christian Gospel and its implications upon the new social order is at least one of the chief causes of the present tragic predicament which has made possible the rise and spread of Communism."⁽¹⁾ This sense of guilt has been particularly apparent in the Protestant churches of Great Britain but Dean Inge thinks that the grounds for it exist throughout the whole church: "No branch of Christendom was ready to face the problems of the age of industrialism and of rapidly advancing science."⁽²⁾ Because a sense of guilt for the social wrongs of the past profoundly affects the church of today, instances of this type of thought could be indefinitely multiplied. For example in 1911 the Rev. Dr. Watson wrote: "Many hold aloof from the church from the conviction that she has not done all she might have done for social amelioration; that she has acquiesced, and so helped to stereotype, their environment and those bad conditions under which they groan. That

^{on Communism}
(1) Report op.cit. 15.

(2) Inge. op.cit. 19.

undoubtedly is a shortcoming for which the church should now stand in sackcloth. She has not preached sufficiently the Gospel of the Kingdom. She has not applied Christian ethics to social, economic and industrial conditions. She has emphasised charity more than justice." (1) So the heart searching of the church has continued and she has wisely submitted herself to the self-examination which St. Paul urges upon the individual Christian. Confession of the sins of the fathers may indeed have been excessive for such confession so readily becomes pharisaic - especially if it be intended to carry weight in political circles.

A second reaction amongst Christians, however, in face of violent attacks upon the faith, has been to charge other disciples with betrayal and apostasy. This has been facilitated by the deep divisions and animosities that have existed between various branches of the church. Thus the Rev. Robert Burns of Paisley (1789-1869) says that "science was not the prime mover in the French Revolution but an obscurantist religion." (2) And it is a commonplace for Western Christians to point to the erastianism, corruption and obscurantism of the Orthodox Church in Russia as amongst

(1) Watson. Quoted MacKinnon. op.cit. 226.

(2) Burns. op.cit. 164.

the reasons for its downfall: "After reading a "plain, objective and not unsympathetic account of Russian religion," the professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of London declared in 1934 that he could "only come to the conclusion, and it is a conclusion that all true friends of religion will share - nearly all that religion has been, and has meant, in Russia ought to perish forever from the face of the earth and from the memory of men.""(1)

In a less drastic fashion this process of blame continues in the west between Christians of different ecclesiastical background and social outlook. For the betrayal of Christian values in the economic sphere Calvin has sometimes been accounted the chief villain in the piece. - as if the church having "washed its face at the Reformation"(2) had proceeded, in the course of time and under Calvin's influence to soil its hands with business enterprise.

Bishop Gore in his preface to R.H. Tawney's, "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism", tells us that it is the very aim and object of the book to reach some satisfactory conclusion in this controversy: "We have for many years been feeling our want of such a study, sufficiently documented

(1) Prof. John MacMurray.
Quoted. Webb, op.cit. 1005.

(2) Archbishop F. Temple.
Quoted. Glasgow Herald 15/1/53.

and grounded upon an adequate knowledge of the literature of the period, as we have watched the modern battle between zealous Mediaevalists impugning the Reformation as deeply responsible for the sins of modern industrialism, and no less zealous Protestants rebutting the charge, or throwing it back."⁽¹⁾

It is the same interest which prompts this present study. For Tawney deals mainly with Luther and Calvin, with the English Puritans and Nonconformists, he touches little upon Scotland and finishes his study before modern industrialism has well begun. There is also the consideration that the social history of Scotland is a field by no means overworked. In fact according to a recent reviewer, "the social development of modern Scotland must be amongst the most neglected fields of historical research."⁽²⁾ This is particularly true of the social impact of the church. The Disruption has stolen the field and other aspects of church life and influence have been neglected.

Scotland may well offer a most fruitful field for the study of that much canvassed theme, the influence of Calvinism upon Capitalism. The Deism of the 18th Century -

(1) Tawney. op.cit. XV.

(2) English Historical Review.
July 1949. p.377.

the enemies of Professor Simson in 1721 called it Arianism -(1) affected the church to such a degree as to capture the machinery of the establishment in the form of Moderatism. Under the leadership of Principal Robertson the Westminster Confession was in danger of being abandoned.(2) But the French Revolution is thought to have operated in favour of a return to orthodoxy; and when it came to the test case of MacLeod Campbell in 1831, Calvinism appeared again triumphant. No one can dispute the profound and continuous influence of Calvinism upon the life of the country. If there be connection, however, between Calvinism and Capitalism, Scotland would seem to offer an example of delayed action. The Reformation was established in 1560, but it cannot be said that the economic virtues or commercial expansion are much in evidence before 1707. The rapid development of material wealth coincided with an epoch when Calvinism was on the wane. It was lamented by the true Covenanting Succession. Woodrow, writing in 1709, may serve as a type of the stauncher Calvinism that was passing away: "the sin of our too great fondness for trade, to the neglecting

(1) Boston. op.cit. 6.

(2) Campbell. op.cit. 132.

of our more valuable interests, I humbly think will be written upon our judgment.... I am sure the Lord is remarkably frowning upon our trade... since it was put in the room of religion."⁽¹⁾

That the development of material prosperity in Scotland followed the decline of theocratic tendencies in the church is in accordance with Tawney's conclusion that there is no direct connection between the rigorously disciplined society envisaged by Calvin and the vigorous plutocracies that have since been associated with his name. In 1903 Max Weber propounded the thesis that there is a close connection between the Protestant Ethic, as it is found in Calvin, with the Spirit of Capitalism: "it stood at the cradle of the modern economic man."⁽²⁾ Tawney modifies this thesis so drastically that it is surprising that he does not reject it altogether. He acknowledges, for example, that Capitalism flourished to the limits of possibility in Pre Reformation Flanders, Florence and Venice.⁽³⁾ He remarks upon the coincidence that the countries most touched by

(1) Tawney. op.cit. 214.

(2) Weber. op.cit. 174.

(3) Tawney. op.cit. 284.

Calvinism were on the western seaboard of Europe where the discovery of America made economic expansion almost inevitable. Though admitting elsewhere the moral intensity of Calvin, he quotes with approval Brentano to the effect that "Machiavelli was at least as powerful a solvent of traditional ethical restraints as Calvin."⁽¹⁾ He says somewhat significantly that the mine opened by Weber has paid handsome dividends but suggests it is now worked out; by implication it has been overworked. He reaches the modest conclusion: "The capitalist spirit is as old as history, and was not as has sometimes been said the offspring of Puritanism. But it found in certain aspects of later Puritanism a tonic which braced its energies and fortified its already vigorous temper."⁽²⁾

When the General Assembly rearranged its business on certain days because Mrs. Siddon's appearances at the theatre were working havoc with the sederunt,⁽³⁾ it demonstrated how far the church had deviated from the Puritan standards of the previous century. This was in 1784, at the very time when key inventions had rendered possible the factory system and Glasgow merchants were seeking to make good

(1) Tawhey. op.cit. 284.

(2) Tawney. op.cit. 208.

(3) A.Carlyle. op.cit. 339.

in cotton, shipping and iron, their lost pre-eminence in American tobacco. In the preceding decades Adam Smith had been enquiring into the causes of the Wealth of Nations, publishing his work in 1776. He laid down as the most decisive cause of wealth, the freeing of trade from all fetters and becomes the Apostle, par excellence, of economic individualism. He was the close friend of David Hume and though holding appointments subject to religious tests, he betrays a latitudinarism quite alien to the spirit of Calvin. He is appreciative of Presbyterianism and of the Church of Scotland in particular: "There is scarce perhaps to be found anywhere in Europe a more learned, decent, independent, and respectable set of men, than the greater part of the presbyterian clergy of Holland, Geneva, Switzerland, and Scotland."⁽¹⁾ But he has no great liking for established churches. He believed that laissez-faire was the ideal in religion too, and that it would so multiply the number of sects as to "reduce the doctrine of the greater part of them to that pure and rational religion, free from every mixture of absurdity, imposture, or fanaticism, such as wise men have in all ages of the world wished to see established."⁽²⁾

(1) Adam Smith. op.cit. 638.

(2) Adam Smith. op.cit. 623.

In spite of his heterodoxy the clergy, broadly speaking, accepted his economic teaching, not because it was in any way allied to their theological views but in the manner of those who trusted the expert. They saw its brilliant successes more than its weakness. Indeed, they were not alone in this, for these theories had almost an unchallenged sway for a hundred years. Lord Milner says of them: "When I went up (to Oxford) the laissez-faire theory still held the field. All the recognised authorities were "orthodox" economists of the old school. But within ten years the few men who still held the old doctrines in their extreme rigidity had come to be regarded as curiosities." (1)

The Industrial Revolution took its immediate impetus from the inventions of Watt, Hargreaves, Crompton, Arkwright and many another lesser name. It found the justification of its methods in the writings of Adam Smith. Its beginnings coincided with the reign of Moderatism in the Church. The tonic of Calvinism is more diluted than it has been for two hundred years but tonic effects emanating from other quarters are more conspicuous than ever before. In Scotland, at least, the Calvinist-Capitalist thesis can be made to appear maladroit and even ridiculous: a tonic for

(1) Toynbee. op.cit. XXV (Preface).

the exploiter and an anodyne for the exploited. Could even the most paradoxical faith sustain such different roles and produce such contradictory effects?

Yet in Scotland too a case may be made out for the influence of its religion upon its wealth. Was it coincidence that Dale, the greatest name in the early cotton industry, was the leading layman of the Independent Church, or that the Bairds, the largest employers of labour in the middle of the nineteenth century, were churchmen of great repute? It happens commonly enough that wealth comes to the intelligent, the frugal and the hard-working and these were of the very ethos of the church in Scotland, the latter being amongst the traits most deeply implanted by the preaching of the word. John Knox's insistence upon a school being erected in every parish succeeded to the point that Scotland's educational lead over her southern neighbour has often been acknowledged. A nation so taught was bound to increase in wealth. Grant but the conditions of internal peace - of the wide expanse opened to trade in 1707, of the impetus that came to enterprise and invention when their rewards were seen - and the effects of the intelligence, carefulness and application, so studiously nurtured, were bound to be striking. This is

in keeping with Troeltsch's estimate of Calvin's ethics: "His practical active ethic... set in the forefront those elements of behaviour which were practically possible to achieve, while the radical commandments about love and suffering were relegated to the background."⁽¹⁾ As will be seen hereafter, this element is prominent in the outlook of the Scottish clergy of the early industrial epoch. They feared indolence far more than avarice; they had a tremendous respect for enterprise; where many have seen a hidden nefariousness they beheld an overt virtue.

There is, therefore, in Scotland, much to support and much to undermine the thesis associating Capitalism with the Protestant ethic - even in the modified form it has taken from Tawney. Certain aspects of Puritanism did act as a tonic to enterprise but they are so mixed with other elements that no clear conclusion can be drawn. Thus Moderates and Evangelicals are indistinguishable in their outlook on economic affairs. Deeply at issue on the Calvinist principle of the free election of ministers, they differ little in their attitude to Parliamentary Reform or to trade unions or poor relief. Temperamentally

and, at bottom, theologically, they found it impossible ultimately to walk together but they are at one in their interest in the material prosperity of the nation. What truth there is in the not "recondite conclusion",⁽¹⁾ that there is a connection between some post-Reformation religious movements and outbursts of economic energy lies mainly in this: "the duty of labour coupled with the ban on luxury worked out "economically as the impulse to save", and the impulse to save had the effect of building up capital."⁽²⁾ This was shared also by Christians at the furthest remove theologically from one another. The Quakers, as Weber himself admits,⁽³⁾ according to their numbers, can record just as great a proportion of successful businessmen as the followers of Calvin.

I have said that the two reactions of Christians to the charge brought against them by Marx for their share of responsibility for the social malaise of the industrial era have been to take blame to themselves and to their

(1) Tawney. op.cit. X .

(2) Troeltsch. op.cit. 645.

(3) Weber. op.cit. 149.

fathers in the faith, or to endeavour to shift the blame to other branches of the Church. The bias of a particular ecclesiastical allegiance is present in all the writings of the parties to the controversy described by Bishop Gore, as it is inevitably present in my own as a minister of the Church of Scotland. The most opposite contentions have been put forward in this very field. What if the strong radical tradition of religion in Scotland has fostered not Capitalism but Socialism? This is at least hinted at ~~by~~ Mrs. Agnes Mure MacKenzie, in the most recent history of Scotland: "The very close temperamental affinity of Marxism and Calvinism is often remarked on; and it is interesting that the strongholds of both in Scotland should be the Cymric south western districts."⁽¹⁾ This seems to reduce the whole ^{of the} preceding arguments, to which reference has been made, to a measure of absurdity. For the only thing that Calvin, Marx and the "Capitalist" had in common was that they did nothing by halves.

This last association between Calvinism and Socialism has not received the emphasis of the association with Capitalism nor has anything like the same attention been given to its investigation. It tends to be either

(1) Mackenzie. op.cit. 264.

ignored or discredited by writers of the left. We may gather from the previous quotation that there is little sympathy for its content amongst certain historians of the right. Yet Troeltsch takes account of this too and finds it a derivative from the doctrine of stewardship. He links it with the frequency with which ministers and leading laymen of the non established churches in Britain became pioneers of the labour movement.⁽¹⁾ It may have affinities also, with the pronounced Liberalism of the ministries of the Free and Secession churches in Scotland after 1843. Stewardship, then, is not unconnected with Socialism; the faith that rebels is related to the spirit of enterprise; and the faith that acquiesces can be caricatured as an opiate. Yet these are all doctrines not peculiar to Calvinism but deeply embedded in the Christian revelation. Anglo-Catholicism in the development of its social-political outlook betrays the same anomalies.

With these many seemingly contradictory theories in mind I have tried to discover what the attitude of the clergy of the Church of Scotland actually was to the

(1) Troeltsch. op.cit. 649. "The Christian Socialism of the English people at the present day is essentially of Calvinistic origin."

Industrial Revolution. It is an attitude strangely mixed, and would probably best be described as "Tory Socialism". But assured conclusions are of very limited scope. As it was not always easy to differentiate between Moderates and Evangelicals, ⁽¹⁾ if we attempt to praise or blame ministers collectively or by the parties into which they divided, we are confronted with the inexhaustible diversity of history. They were above all things individualists with many outstanding personalities.

I have endeavoured to show the clergy as I have found them; I have not suppressed the unedifying; having a natural inclination to present them in the best light, I have deliberately given large place to ~~Thomas~~ ^{of Campsie,} Lapslie [^] their most reactionary figure; I have judged them, at times perhaps unfairly, from the point of view of social-political developments with which they had no sympathy. Sometimes their foresight and benevolence will appear astonishing; sometimes their blindness to social issues will seem deplorable. They were deeply divided among themselves and appear by modern standards to have treated the social question as far more secondary than it really was. The problems of the factory

(1) Watt. op.cit. 6.

system though affecting an area territorially small, seem to us far more grievous than the right of patrons in electing ministers. If they were prepared to divide and sacrifice upon the latter point, it seems that they should have been less inclined to accept the former as largely inevitable.

Yet there are situations in which a church can only retain its identity by asserting its freedom to appoint its own leaders. Who can be certain if this 19th Century Scotland were not such an occasion? The Erastian of one generation has something in common with the collaborator of another for both are in danger of unworthy compromise. We may think that they strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, that they planted roots of religious bitterness where roots of social bitterness were already showing signs of vigorous growth; or we may think the Christian tradition of Scotland indescribably enriched by the numbers prepared to "go without the camp bearing His reproach."

In this study our concern is with the new region of historical data which Marx brought to notice. And I have used the documents which best exhibit the church in its social context and outlook. To these documents the Disruption is purely incidental. Little or no light is thrown upon the

Voluntary Controversy or the Non-Intrusionist Controversy by the Statistical Accounts or the pamphlets on the Poor Law. From them it would be impossible to decide what line their authors would take in 1843.

To discover the hard core of facts regarding the Church's attitude to industry I have drawn most heavily upon Second Statistical Account and have confined my researches, on the whole, to the Industrial Belt. In the seventeen nineties when the First Account was being written, Scotland, by and large, was untouched by industry. Glasgow was already a flourishing centre and so were places like Paisley, Falkirk and New Lanark and some which have returned to complete obscurity like Catrine in Ayrshire; but in most counties industry was non-existent or merely vestigial. Even in 1850 Edinburgh offers but a poor field for studying its effects, though its overcrowding and slums and epidemics give wide enough scope to the social historian. It is more than likely that I have left untraced, in some stagnant backwater, the opinions of some ministers upon industrial conditions that they had seen before their translation from the spectacle of mines and factories and an incipient proletariat. But

the general trend of their thoughts, established by large quotation, is clear enough.

It might be thought that the social outlook of the church could be best determined from the extensive writings of Thomas Chalmers, its most distinguished figure. These constitute, indeed, one of the largest and most fruitful sources of information but they have been the subject of much attention; little could be added to the brilliant exposition of them in Professor Saunders' Scottish Democracy. I have therefore used them but little, believing that Chalmers was a representative churchman but that his experience of industrialism was more limited than that of many others. His views are not unusual except in their copious yet trenchant utterance and in their triumphant application to the poor in St. Johns, Glasgow, and to Scotland at large in church extension. I have on the other hand, made much use of the writings of the Rev. Robert Burns of Paisley whom Saunders records as a convert from the old system of poor relief to the new.⁽¹⁾ He "came out" at the Disruption but emigrated to Toronto in 1845. It may well be that he was unique in thinking the social question more

(1) Saunders. op.cit. 411.

important than the ecclesiastical or at any rate in giving expression to that view.

At a time when the Third Statistical Account is making its appearance it is wholesome to recall the great service rendered by the clergy in their overwhelming responsibility for the First and Second. The introduction to the Second Account expresses the belief that it will remain a monument to their intelligence. It is also a monument to their humour, their broad human sympathy and their desire to increase that quantum of human happiness they were instructed to examine. For though many show a consciousness of belonging to a privileged class and their tone is sometimes patronising, there is evidence too of a deep humility in face of grave social conditions and of a strong sensitiveness to the still sad music of humanity. The contemporary importance of their work is attested by the use that Malthus made of the Old Account and by his entering into correspondence with some of its authors.⁽¹⁾ Marx himself pays indirect and unconscious tribute: "in comparison with the social statistics of Britain, those of

(1) N.S.A. IX. 166.

Germany and the rest of Western Continental Europe are wretchedly compiled."⁽¹⁾ Society today maintains its very existence upon an immense basis of statistical information, and it is liable to be forgotten how much the clergy pioneered and contributed directly to this great foundation. From Webster's analysis onwards they provided much of the knowledge which is the sine qua non of collective action. They furnished their country with the most picturesque and widely descriptive social information of any in Europe.

(1) Marx. op.cit. 863.

CHAPTER TWO.

The Clergy received the Industrial Revolution with approval.

"In labouring for the good of their eternity they have reaped by the way those blessings which religion so abundantly sheds over the pilgrimage which leads to it". Chalmers: Op.Cit.27

Summary: Biblical attitude to invention: its association with Cain: conservatism not in itself approved: invention accepted with misgiving: guilt attaching to ambition: little ^{of this} sense of guilt in promoters of Industrial Revolution: moral and material progress essential to each other: clerical attitude Deuteronomic: approval of Blantyre mills: desire for mills at Strathaven: for mines at Cambusnethan for industry at Ayr and Row: decay of rural population in Cadder and Crawford: industrialists regarded as benefactors: Shotts iron works: praise for industrial magnate: cotton mill wanted at Dunbar: the Bairds and ^xDions: enterprise at Greenock and Paisley: minister becomes industrialist: another invents reaper: another improves blast-furnace: another plans a canal: pride in Glasgow's industries: the steam engine: the self acting mule: clerical zeal for economic expansion disinterested.

The attitude of the clergy to the first stages of the Industrial Revolution, to the invention of new machines, the buildings of large factories, the introduction

of new manufactures and the general expansion of commerce between 1790 and 1840 is, broadly speaking, one of approval and even welcome. There is, with regard to the new developments, scarcely any of the hesitation which a close study of the Bible might have been expected to arouse. For it is significant that the earliest inventions recorded in scripture are attributed to the descendants of Cain: "And Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron And Lamech said unto his wives Adah and Zillah, hear my voice: ye tower of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man unto my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."⁽¹⁾ Lamech's song of exultation over the new crafts springing up within his family breathes a spirit of contempt towards God. Cain had received a mark upon his brow to protect him from the vengeance of the blood feud. But Lamech can now dispense with that protection, seeing he has devised very serviceable instruments of his own. Henceforth he is no longer completely dependent on the Divine mercy.

In this passage of Genesis the first products of the artificers in brass and iron are destructive, but

(1.) Genesis 4 vv 22-4.

but the ordinary tools by which man subdues nature and makes the earth productive have inevitably the effect of lessening his sense of creatureliness and dependence. They are, however, "a necessary human enterprise"⁽¹⁾, for man, according to a famous definition is a tool making animal and is so differentiated, in outward activity, as to his species.

The spiritually minded descendants of Seth began also to use inventions and they did it without censure, as presumably Abel had used his shepherd's staff without incurring the blame of the sacred writers.

The association of invention with Cain indicates a tendency in scripture to look askance at the mechanical skill of man and to be apprized of its dangers. But elsewhere in scripture there is much tacit acceptance of the changing technology of an advancing civilisation. The Rechabite attempt to contract out of a new phase of civilisation is not in itself approved. They represented a conservative protest against settlement and agriculture on behalf of the former nomadic life, and they are commended, not for their ideals but for the tenacity with which they clung to them.

"Thus said the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Go and tell the man of Judah and the inhabitants of

(1) Ne~~eb~~uhr Op.Cit 29.

Jerusalem, will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? Saith the Lord, The words of Jonadeb the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their fathers commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me." (1) Here is no commendation of loyalty to an obsolescent culture but commendation of the virtue of loyalty itself.

The Rechabite alliance with Jehu has given rise to a contrast of their outlook with that of the prophets. "Rechabites believed they could only remain loyal followers of Jehovah if they continued to maintain the habits of their fathers when they lived in the wilderness. The prophets on the other hand had taken part in the settlement in Palestine and had even encouraged the setting up of the Kingdom. They believed that Israel could maintain its old faith though it accepted civilisation. All for which they were anxious was that their people should avoid the vices of civilisation." (2)

Though one of the Apocryphal books revels in craftsmanship (3) the attitude of scripture to technological advance may be said to be one both of misgiving and of

(1) Jeremiah 35 13 - 14.

(2) Welch Op.Cit 86.

(3) Ecclesiasticus Chapter 38.

tacit acceptance. The attitude of the Scottish clergy of the early industrial era shows little of the first. In their work as statisticians they give the impression of an acceptance of new machines and factories more eager than scripture would warrant, and, as a rule, without hesitation.

a / The crux of the scriptural position is to attach guilt, with its attendant judgment, to all high reaching human ambition. This is vividly presented in the well known story of the Tower of Babel and has its counterpart in other ancient traditions. In the legend of Prometheus his discovery of fire is regarded as stolen - as if he had invaded a domain not properly his possession - and for this he is imprisoned by Zeus. "The Tower of Babel myth belongs to the same category of mythical fancies as the Promethean myth, though the two are independent and not derived from each other. They both picture God as being jealous of man's ambition, achievements and pretensions. The modern mind, which has exchanged the wooden-headed literalism of orthodoxy for a shallow rationalism can find no validity in the idea of a jealous God ... A jealous God impresses the primitive fear of higher powers from which the modern man feels himself

happily emancipated. Yet the idea of a jealous God impresses a permanently valid sense of guilt in all human striving." (1)

The lack of this sense of guilt in the social effects of their actions seems, in general to have characterised the promoters of the Industrial Revolution. It entered little into that "pure and rational religion" which was Adam Smith's ideal, but it must have been lacking too in many religiously orthodox industrialists with regard to the condition of their employees. This was the most ambitious expansion of human effort and the most thorough going attack upon environment that the world had seen. Yet it was to a large extent spontaneous and unimaginative with regard to the deeper needs of man, confusing wealth with well - being. The caveats implicit in the early wisdom of the race were completely ignored. Significantly, the main protests were instructive and came from displaced and unemployed workers. "The Luddites, and some of the agricultural labourers of the south in 1830 struck out blindly at what hurt them most - magistrates or masters or machines". (2) There would have been little point in a new order of Rechabites protesting against industrialisation as their predecessors had protested against settled communities. It would have

Necbukr / (1) Necbukr. Op.Cit. 27

(2) Clapham Op.Cit. 313.

become a new monasticism; to decide what degree of technology was to be rejected would not have been easy. But the clergy were very much the children of their generation in their somewhat uncritical acceptance of so great a change in society and of much of the ruthlessness with which it was accomplished.

The Deluge following closely upon the first inventions, the speedy judgment upon the Tower of Babel, the imprisonment of Prometheus - these are formidable warnings against thinking that material advance can ever be a substitute for moral progress. To rely on the one to the exclusion of the other is always disastrous. But in the human situation the two are so inextricably ^xmined that they are often both advanced at the same time. This was the dilemma which faced the clergy in the early days of industry. Were their parishioners to be more adequately fed, housed and employed than they had been before? They were morally bound to answer in the affirmative. So we find them welcoming the factory which promised all these advantages and even displaying an inventive genius themselves.

There was, in fact, an attitude to inventiveness far more positive than anything in scripture, though some have seen it as the legitimate offspring of the

Christian revelation. "Are you surprised", asks Chesterton, "that the same civilisation which believed in the Trinity discovered steam?" (1) Chesterton has overlooked the association of invention with Cain (and of Capitalism with Calvin) but his question assumes the very real truth that the spiritual life of man and his technology are essential to each other. His argument goes further, that if people have all their doubts resolved as to things unseen and behold behind all things the personal and the purposive, they have a release of energy to dominate things seen. If this be the reason why western civilisation, in contrast to others, developed technology to the unique mastery of environment, then the clergy of Scotland had their due share in this advance.

To sum up: their outlook was Deuteronomic. It had much the same emphasis upon the rewards attaching to judicious toil. "Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store". (2) The New Testament admonition "not slothful in business" (3) has become at once more positive and more central; the temporal fruits of religion are more obtrusive than in the Sermon on the Mount.

Here is a typical instance: "Diffuse the

(1) Chesterton. Op.Cit 63.

(2) Deuteronomy 12 verses 3 & 5.

(3) Romans. 12 " 11.

knowledge of pure religion, let its healing virtue descend on the dwellings of the rich, and the humbler habitations of the poor, and to the higher spiritual blessings of which it shall be productive there shall be added the contentment, the peacefullness, the temporal prosperity which are its natural fruits, and in the good providence of God its gracious and blissful reward." (1) This exhortation is Deuteronomic. The main difference resides in the new and difficult, yet fruitful medium of temporal prosperity; for "the city" and "the field" had been replaced for many by "the dark Satanic Mills".

We proceed to give many illustrations of the enthusiasm of churchmen for industry and invention.

Thus the clerical writer on Blantyre remarks upon the improved living conditions in industry compared with agriculture: "The ordinary food of the workers is much better than that of the agricultural labourers in the neighbourhood". The whole passage indicates that the factory village had more social amenities and a better living standard than its agricultural counterpart. "In general the working people marry young and in all cases where any degree of care is exercised they live very comfortably. Many of them have brought up large and

(1.) N.S.A. Vol VII Greenock 493.

respectable families. The village is kept clean and neat; to insure which the company provide both watchmen and scavengers. With regard to the habits of the people they may be said to be cleanly. To encourage this desirable object the company built a public washing - house several years ago to which the house holders have access in rotation; and a large bleaching green on the banks of the river, with a good exposure capable of accommodating ten times the amount of the population has also been provided. The village is provided by means of force pumps at the works with both soft and hard water A considerable quantity of butcher's meat is consumed every week in the village. There are also several shops or stores from which the people derive the advantage of competition and low prices.⁽¹⁾

"Here is a clergyman obviously convinced that the Industrial Revolution had brought great blessings. Leisure had decreased, as we shall afterwards observe, but it was a price which the workers were willing to pay for the ampler provision of food and of general welfare which they enjoyed over their agricultural neighbours. No wonder the minister of a parish, not so far removed, lamented the absence of mills which

(1.) N.S.A. VI Blantyre 324.

might have brought a similar prosperity:" It seems not a little remarkable that no public works or mills have been erected at Strathaven or in its neighbourhood. Abundance of water to drive machinery might be obtained at trifling expense. An embankment might be erected at Hapton's Craigs for perhaps less than £100 which might supply any number of mills every day of the year. The excellence of the roads and the ready communications with Glasgow and the Clyde, as well as the healthiness of the situation are all most favourable for such undertakings. I am of opinion that Strathaven is only in its infancy; and that from its locality, and from the industry and enterprise of its inhabitants it is likely to rise speedily into importance." (1)

That the Rev. James Proudfoot should make this his leading, "miscellaneous observation", is an indication of the large advantages to a community that were thought to accompany the arrival of industry. The minister of Cambusnethan looks forward to the expansion of the railway system for the better exploitation of the rich coal seams in his parish. "Nearly the whole of the parish is full of coal, and in many places it is of great thickness. Should the railway

come through this parish, as is expected, it will open up the coal-fields in various places where there is at present no demand; and will add greatly to the wealth and improvement of the district." (1)

The minister of Ayr, which in 1830 had only 6000 of a population, looked with envious eyes at Kilmarnock whose growing industries had made it about three times the size. His desire for a distillery may be exceptional, but the tenor of his observations represents the clerical mind of the times.

"It has often been a matter of surprise that Ayr has not been more benefited by manufacturers and public works, - possessing, as it does, so many advantages for this purpose, and such facilities of communication with other places both by sea and land, with such an extensive grain country surrounding it, distilleries could not fail to thrive; the price of labour is low rated and all the other requisites are easily procurable. Cotton works might prosper as well here as at Catrine, the town being favourably situated in regard to all the materials necessary, - coal, water, and labourers in abundance; while it has the great advantage, by enjoying the means of sea as well

of land carriage. And we can see nothing to hinder the manufacture of wool in its various branches, particularly in the weaving of carpets; and we mention it thus particularly, because it is the only experiment of the kind that has yet been made by any of our townsmen."⁽¹⁾

The minister of Row wished to have industries set up as a cure for the poverty in his parish: "The expenditure on poor, however, is now threatening to exceed the income, and must ~~we~~^{etc} long do so, unless some means are taken to arrest the increase of the growing number of paupers; and by far the most effectual means would be to introduce some public works, and curtail both the facilities and the places for dram-drinking".⁽²⁾

With the exception of weaving which was not a particular product of the industrial revolution, though its organisation became "capitalist" under its impact, the operatives in factories were normally better paid than agricultural workers. The agricultural wage, as we shall afterwards observe, was regarded as a minimum, on the same level as that of the unskilled labourer; and the addition of perquisites, (of uncertain assessment,) has seldom countered the tendency of the agricultural

(1) N.S.A. V Ayr 53.

(2) N.S.A. VIII Row 81.

worker to move into the towns. Rural depopulation was a marked feature of the times. There was the pressure of lairds, consolidating their farms, upon the people to move; there was the attraction of the higher wages paid by the new industries in the towns.

The clergy of some rural areas lamented this decay of the population with as much vigour as their town brethren applauded its increase. "The love of money, and the desire to lay house to house and field to field, have made many parts of this parish once populous, now a wilderness. The few who yet linger here of former generations can tell of ten farm-steadings in their remembrance now effaced from the map of the parish. Within the last twenty six years, no fewer than thirteen properties some of them of considerable extent, and which were considered as secure as the foundation of the everlasting hills, have from necessity exchanged proprietors and the decent families have been reduced and scattered. Many passages in the deserted village apply strongly and appropriately to the parish of Cadder".⁽¹⁾ This is a formidable indictment of the rapacity of lairds; the minister has become a village Hampden, expressing great

(1.) N.S.A. VI Cadder 404.

social concern. With so gradual a development he was not in position to do much more.

There were, however, more impersonal forces at work than enterprising landlords. We have seen in Blantyre the greater convenience and amenities of town life. When the transition from subsistence agriculture to the commercial agriculture of modern times, is taken into consideration, we see that the lairds were but hastening on an economic process for which they were not altogether responsible. The small holding has been notoriously a subsidised unit; the larger farm was to a great extent the answer to the new economic situation; increasing population and improved transport invited a commercial agriculture. It is to the credit of certain of the clergy that they denounced the selfishness and rapacity which accompanied this agricultural revolution. Bound up as their interests were with the heritors and land-owning classes, they were not blind to the abuse of power, in that frequently unscrupulous dispossession of crofters which was steadily decreasing number of their parishioners:

"The practice which now so generally prevails in this country, of uniting many small farms into one, is no doubt the chief cause of this decrease. There is

perhaps no parish where this practice has so generally prevailed as in this (Crawford); and indeed nearly half of this extensive parish is in the hands of non-resident tenants, - the resident tenants occupying only two or three farms. In the memory even of the present generation, fifteen families lived where there is now scarcely the vestage of a ruin. Other parts of the parish show the same marks of depopulation."(1)

From the consideration of rural depopulation accelerated by the Industrial Revolution and deplored by some of the clergy we return to the general approbation with which their brethren viewed the growth of towns and cities. There lies here a difficult question of ethics. The laying of "house to house and field to field", reprehensible as it was, when motivated by greed and acquisitiveness, was, on the whole, less reprehensible than in the times of Isaiah who gives us the phrase. In Isaiah's time many were dispossessed or reduced in status circumstance for the aggrandisement of the powerful who were simply multiplying the resources of their own families, and this was common enough in the Highlands and poor agricultural areas of Scotland. But from the dispossession which created the farms of modern

(1.) N.S.A. VI Crawford 331.

times there came a greater productiveness and a larger supply for the outside world. Very often the crofters became workers in the larger unit. In Cadder and Crawford this did not take place - holdings were cleared to make sheep runs. The richer farm lands like the lothians were never depopulated, and the uniting of farms was beneficial to the world at large. Cf.

When it comes to laying machine to machine and factory to factory, the charge that others were being dispossessed does not arise directly - though the domestic industries were ruined in the process. The ethical problem is changed and the first industrialists had all the appearance of benefactors. In so far as their enterprise brought work and more ample provision they have a claim to respect not easily dismissed. ~~"I am satisfied", says the minister of Lochwinnoch~~
~~"that the inhabitants of the village have for a~~
~~considerable time past been more comfortably provided~~
~~for than those of places where there are no mills".~~⁽¹⁾

Ethical judgment on the early industrialists will depend mainly upon the considerateness with which the individual pursued his enterprise. Looking back

(1.) ~~N.S.A. VII Lochwinnoch 104.~~

from the present day it seems that considerateness of the claims of women and children, of the needs of personality for leisure and of the beauty of nature, was at its lowest ebb. But the clergy of that day saw the man of enterprise as a great provider of food and employment for the people. No doubt the bird's eye view, which history takes, misses much that was clear to the man on the spot. We have no direct experience of the poverty that was being transformed by the new employments.

The Industrial Revolution was a fresh instance of man's learning from the Ant.⁽¹⁾ "The suppression of spirit by nature is the result of that inherent indolence to which humanity is so prone and in which many thinkers have seen the root of all evil - the *πρόθυμα* of Chrysostom, the laziness or "inattention" of Fichte, the propensity to drift, to follow the path of least resistance".⁽²⁾ A Church which bore nearly the whole burden of poor relief,

(1.) Proverbs 6 6.

(2.) Bowman Op.Cit. 18.

tended to take Chrysostom's view of indolence. Its mistake may have been to elevate the opposing virtue into a beatitude. Its blessing is for enterprise; for the man who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before; for the inventor of machines; for the great entrepreneur who multiplies machines and factory chimneys, and whose wealth, produced by untiring effort, is in some way balanced by the enormous wage bill of his employers. Ministers placed assiduity amongst the highest of the virtues. "If he was deemed a patriot who made two stalks of grass to grow, where one grew before, he certainly has a better title to the name, who makes abundant crops for human food to rise from the barren heath".⁽¹⁾

At this time some of the most barren heaths in central Scotland were beginning to sprout with factory chimneys. This makes the minister of Shotts rejoice in the productive use of land that had been nearly desert. "The country around these works was formerly altogether unproductive, and, from the

(1.) N.S.A. VII Neilston 320.

want of roads was of little or no value; but from the impulse given to improvement by the circulation of £500 weekly amongst the workmen, etc. the face of the country has undergone a most surprising change." (1)

Seeing so great a change for the better he cannot but give it his blessing and desire its extension: "Much advantage has of late years been derived by the inhabitants of this parish from the Shotts Iron-Works - the employment which is given there to the active and well - behaved, and the money which is there circulated weekly, may well call forth on the part of all of us a desire for their prosperity and extension." (2)

The pioneers of these industries are often the subject of favourable comment for some of them, like Mr. Dunn of Old Kilpatrick, - with his cotton mills at Duntocher, his paper and chemical works at Dalmuir, his employment roll of 1650 in the parish and 200 in Glasgow, and his annual wage bill of £39,000 - were founders of churches as well as mills:

(1) N.S.A. VI Shotts P. 361.

(2) N.S.A. VI " 364.

"Mr. Dunn is one of the most remarkable instances which the history of our country presents, of a person who has risen to great affluence, whose only patrimony at the first was the knowledge of a trade, united with great sagacity, great industry and great perseverance." (1)

It is worthy of notice that Massillon, one of Louis XIV's court preachers would have considered this a very worldly standard of judgment because he treats the same subject satirically:

"The art of raising, from an obscure patrimony, a monstrous and overgrown fortune, at the expense often of justice and probity, is the science of business and individual good management." (2)

As a spur to enterprise the profit motive was never selected for blame. On the contrary, the clergy saw the activity of the new capitalists as springing not so much from the love of money as from praiseworthy initiative and unremitting application with even a measure of

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(1.) N.S.A. VIII Old Kilpatrick 27.

(2.) ~~M~~essillon, Op.Cit. 3.

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altruism. The industrialist inevitably employed labour and paid wages. At the outset it seemed their sufficient merit and justification, and just about as practical a form as patriotism could then assume:

"At the village of west Barns, a cotton and flax mill is just now begun to be erected, from which we have great expectations. The cotton manufacture is at present (1893) one of the most flourishing and useful branches of commerce in Britain. It employs a number of hands, and especially young people. This mill is a new thing in this country, and if it succeeds will be great blessing to this corner. It is generally esteemed a patriotic attempt and has the good wishes of every person of public spirit".⁽¹⁾ When cotton mills had been long established we shall find some ministers very dubious about child labour, and deploring the total effect of the mills.

Great names still extant in Scottish Industry, receive honourable mention, almost as if their founders had been the disinterested agents

of human welfare: "It is to the Messrs Baird, especially to James Baird, Esq., of Gartsherrie that we are indebted for an invention as new and important in the history of heated air as Watt's invention was in the history of the Steam engine. The Messrs Baird were clearly entitled to a patent had they thought fit to apply for it but these gentlemen have generously sacrificed self-emolument and that in various ways greatly to their own loss".⁽¹⁾ Among the qualities of the Bairds that commended them to this clergyman was their abstaining from Sunday work at the blast-furnances where it would have been most profitable. Others already worked seven days. This may, indeed, be prejudiced reporting because the Bairds became the most celebrated benefactors of the church; and their reputed purchase of five estates with mansion houses within a few years, shows that the losses, above stated, had been amply compensated by gains in other directions. But they developed the resources of many parishes, creating, it may seem to us now,

(1) N.S.A. VI Old Monkland 662.

squalid towns, where before there had been only squalid villages or barren land.

In 1839 the iron works with which Govan has been both blessed and cursed were being rapidly extended; "The iron works of Mr. William Dixon claim a more particular description.... He has erected two hot blast furnaces in the immediated neighbourhood of his extensive collieries in this parish. Other two are now erecting and will be in operation in the course of a few weeks. His intention is to erect eight in all, each of which will produce the average quantity of 4000 tons of pig iron annually. Near his blast furnaces Mr. Dixon is likewise constructing a bar iron manufactory in which he will have forty two puddling furnaces. These if kept constantly at work, will make according to the lowest calculation 400 tons of bar iron weekly.(1)

This is objectively recorded but the emphasis is on production; there is an undertone of praise for enterprise so outstanding. When we come to consider child labour we shall take note of another aspect of the collieries which the minister does not mention.

The idea that an employer of labour might be also an exploiter of labour did not quickly become articulate in an age of swiftly increasing prosperity. In Scotland, apart from Robert Owen and later Carlyle, the economic awakening was divorced from the intellectual life; in a wider sphere Shelley's famous call to revolt⁽¹⁾ was within an agrarian, not an industrial context. The clergy were so aware of the benefits of employment that they are not shrewd observers of exploitation. In their view, a community might well be grateful to the discoverers and organisers of the new sources of wealth with which it was being enriched. To found a factory was to bless one's fellow men.

Thus, as we shall see, no comparison of wages and profits is to be found within the scope of their survey. It was enough that more people were being employed and that, in appearance at least, and on the whole, the spectre of want which had so long haunted the country, was being laid. Greenock, for example was held to be deeply in the debt of these who founded her mills.

(1.) "Men of England, wherefore plough
For the Lords who lay ye low?"

"To the enumeration which has now been given of the manufactories in Greenock, we add the following description of the splendid cotton works recently erected on Shaw's water by a few gentlemen residing in the town who feel a lively interest in promoting its prosperity." (1)

Under conditions of employment relative to the times the modern world welcomes its new industries. When society at large made no provision for its able bodied unemployed, the ascription of high patriotism to the men who opened up new fields of wealth is scarcely surprising: "Mer Humphrey Fulton of Maxwelltown, Paisley was the first who introduced the silk manufacture into Scotland..... In company with his two sons he often employed from 400 to 600 looms, and in the various branches of the manufacture gave daily tread to 1000, frequently 1500 people. Many with him have merited of their family; few have deserved better of their country." (2)

In the case of Barrhead it was the minister himself who brought about the Industrial Revolution within his parish. "Manufactures - These form the chief distinction of this parish.

(1.) N.S.A. VII Greenock 442.

(2.) N.S.A. VIII Paisley 270.

About the year 1767 or 1768 the idea was entertained of making this parish a manufacturing one. The Rev. Mr. Henry Miller a man of great spirit and enterprise, having succeeded to the fortune of his late brother, the celebrated bookseller in the Strand London, projected an inkle factory, and established it, with some of the influential heritors as co-partners."⁽¹⁾

There are indications here of a planned economy just as there are instances of villages and towns laid out in accordance with the lights of the times and the disposition of the lairds and industrialist who planned them. Here the minister and his heritors have treated the parish as a development - area but, (as we shall see, in studying the moral and physical effects of industry,)

his scheme by no means worked out to the satisfaction of his successor some sixty years later.

A survey of the favourable reception accorded by the clergy to the new industries would not be complete without some instances of their enthusiasm for invention. Whether it was the spirit of the times or the nature of their task as statisticians there

(1.) N.S.A. VIII Neilston 335.

is nothing more prominent in the accounts of growing parishes than lists of the inventions and processes which initiated and stimulated the growth of industry. Clerics themselves made notable contributions. It was the Rev. Dr. Cartwright who invented the power loom and took out many patents in the field of textiles. In 1827 the Rev. Patrick Bell of Carmyllie produced a reaping machine "to mitigate the incessive toil of the harvester" for which he took no patent. "Forty years later he was presented with £1,000 subscribed by Scottish agriculturalists in recognition of his services".⁽¹⁾

A minister was credited with a major contribution to the improvement of the blast-furnace: "Mr. Stirling one of the ministers of Kilmarnock, in December 1816, obtained a patent for his" invention of diminishing the consumption of fuel," The great principle of Mr. Stirlings patent was that a constant stream of heated air might be kept up by its being passed through long and narrow flues, alternately heated by which a more intense heat might be produced with less expenditure of fuel. This was the first patent taken out for the

(1.) Mackinnon Op.Cit 67.

application of heated air to furnaces." (1)

While one minister refers to the "mania" (2) for railways, more were concerned like the minister of Cambusnethan, previously quoted, that their parishes might reap the full benefit of this amazing revolution in transport. The minister of Greenock foresees the enormous advantages of linking Edinburgh and Glasgow by rail:

"Every addition made to the means of communication is a boon conferred on the districts to which it is applicable ... When the Edinburgh and Glasgow railway shall be opened the number of travellers will be still more augmented; the communication between the East and West coasts will be more frequent and all the towns on the whole line of railway will profit by this beautiful invention of modern times." (3)

A new development in the canal system was actually planned by a minister: "When the improvements above-mentioned are complete. (i.e. the deepening of the river Cart linking Paisley with the Clyde)"

(1.) N.S.A. VI Old Monkland 660.

(2.) N.S.A. VII Neilston 340.

(3.) N.S.A. VII Greenock 454.

It is expected, that a plan suggested by Dr. Boag in the former Statistical Account, by which the inhabitants of Paisley may reap the full benefit of the completion of the great canal between Forth and Clyde, will also be carried into effect. It is the formation of a branch from the great canal to the Clyde, to terminate as nearly opposite to the mouth of the Cart as the ground will permit; the advantages of which must be great". (1)

The full enthusiasm for invention and industrial expansion is best seen in Dr. Macfarlan's account of Glasgow. In the progress of the Industrial Revolution the city was several decades in front of the rest of Scotland. Forty pages are devoted to commerce and manufacture; only twenty are given to history. A noted statistician, James Cleland L.L.D. collaborated with the minister of the Cathedral in compiling the account. In all likelihood he contributed most of the industrial information. But the editorship of Dr. Macfarlan - giving such large room to industry - shows that he relished the idea of Glasgow flourishing by means quite additional to the preaching of the word. The history

(1.) N.S.A. VII Paisley 147.

of the various trades of Glasgow, their advances and recessions the effect of the union, the passing of the staple industry from tobacco, through cotton to iron, is set forth at length. And one quotation will serve to illustrate the pride of the authors in Glasgow's industrial pre-eminence: - "On the expiration of the exclusive privilege, the engineers of this city commenced making steam-engines; and to such an extent is this business carried on here for every part of the country that there are now fourteen firms, who make steam-engines or mill machinery. Some of the works are more like national than private undertakings. Three houses alone employ upwards of 1000 persons in this important branch of trade." (1)

To compare the works to national undertakings shows how greatly the writer was impressed by their extent. He felt himself invested with a kind of vicarious glory in the achievements of his townsmen. (1)

Interest in inventions runs high in Glasgow Account. Here is a shrewd observation on the important change that machines brought to the labour problem.

"In 1767, Mr. Hargreaves invented the Spining jenny. n/2

This machine though of limited powers when compared with the beautiful inventions which succeeded it, must be considered as the first and leading step in the progress of discovery which carried improvements into every branch of the manufacture changing as it proceeds, the nature and character of the means of production by substituting mechanical operation for human labour"(1) This acute insight into the significance of the machine is not followed (as we might have wished) by any enlargement upon the social problem it created, nor upon the ~~paradox~~ that labour saving devices attracted more labourers wherever they were introduced. We shall deal later with the attitude of the clergy to the unemployed and to the new poverty which existed alongside industry. But it must be said that the Accounts in general are more conscious of the prosperity brought by industry than of the distresses it created.

Amongst a galaxy of talent which included Bell of the Comet and Macintosh of the waterproof, primacy in invention amongst Scotsmen is generally given to James Watt. The Accounts give him a higher place (2) than he would now be accorded in the ranks of famous Scotsmen.

(1.) N.S.A. VI Glasgow 141.

(2.) His fame exceeds that of all the warriors and statesmen of Scotland N.S.A. VII 418.

"his inventions ... besides the ingenuity and beauty of contrivance which they possess have had an influence upon the circumstances of this country and of mankind far more important than that produced by any other mechanical discovery." ⁽¹⁾ This is high praise - from Glasgow which made such ample use of his discovery - but the minister of Greenock, Watts native place, quotes from a French writer, a eulogy that now seems excessive. "Man formerly spoke of the Augustan age and the age of Louis XIV. Some great men have ere now maintained that it would be right to say" the age of voltaire, of Rousseau, of Montesquieu. For my own part I have no hesitation in predicting, that when to the immense services already rendered by the steam-engine shall be added all the wonders which it yet holds in prospect, grateful nations will also speak of the ages of Papin and Watt." ⁽²⁾

We have dwelt at length upon invention because the statistical writers dwell at length upon it and display what may best be termed a strong Promethean interest. If the

(1.) N.S.A. VI Glasgow 142.

(2.) N.S.A. VII Greenock 122.

monks introduced agriculture into many areas there is reason to believe that, (by their keen interest) the clergy of Scotland did much to promote the growth of its manufactures. The most obscure foreman who improves a process is to them a great benefactor. "One of the greatest of those ingenious artisans and mechanics to which this parish has given birth was the late Mr. John Robertson, foreman to James Orr, Esq., of Crofthead. A self-acting mule had long been a desideratum in cotton spinning for more than half a century. What neither Crompton of Bolton; nor Kelly of Glasgow; nor Buchanan of Catrine; nor Eaton of Derby; nor M. de Jonge, an ingenious Frenchman, nor Roberts of Manchester, nor even the talented Mr. Smith of Deanston Works, could do with all their skill - Mr. Robertson single-handed and alone accomplished.⁽¹⁾ In a statement like this there is enthusiasm for mechanical skill; and zeal for local talent has destroyed historical perspective.

What was it the clergy approved in all this vast change which they saw taking place? They had, it seems a great desire to see the resources of their parishes

fully developed, and the people to whom they ministered better served with employment. This was in turn to be the basis of better food, clothing and subsistence in general. They had in mind the increased wealth and status of their towns and villages and the prestige of Scotland itself - for a developed country regards its undeveloped neighbour with disdain. It was their obvious intention that neither their parishes nor their country should fall behind in the race for prosperity. Competition was in the air, the elation of an expanding economy and industry had both its moral and material rewards. The minister of Greenock provides us with a summary of their outlook: "Enjoying those advantages, Greenock will, we trust, continue to hold her place in the mighty competition which, if it has not already commenced, is already approaching, and will rise to still higher eminence than she has yet attained. That this may be her lot is the earnest wish of the writer of this account."(1)

a / We have already seen that the warnings implicit in the Book of Genesis and the Prometheon myth were largely unheeded at the beginning of the Industrial era -

by the world and by the church; machines and inventions received the blessing of the clergy. "With veneration not far removed from worship we look upon mighty engines, mammoth bridges, terrific forges, upclimbing steepes of masonry; and the tendency is to exalt man and let God down. Watt, Stephenson, Arkwright, Wheatstone, Faraday, Lord Kelvin, these be thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Medieval bondage."

That note can be detected in some of the previous quotations, with their great zeal for invention and economic expansion. The religious consciousness of the time may have been too much concerned with *πρόνοια* ; too little with *ὕβρις*. There was very little anticipation of the ills that would attend this new exercise of human ingenuity. The factories which gave work were also a new sphere for the predatory instincts and one more complex and difficult to investigate than the feudal economy they had finally dispelled. It is arguable that hesitation and misgiving as to the new developments, on the part of the spiritual leaders might have led to less haste, to a more controlled expansion and a greater humanitarianism in the methods of the new industrial system.

To improve the material prosperity of the areas of which they had spiritual charge was, however, no mean ambition. We have said their outlook was Deuteronomic, but the quotations show it also to be pragmatic. As the ministers of Glasgow in the Nineteen thirties welcomed the opening of Hillington Industrial Estate so their forbears hailed the advent of every new industry; as the Presbytery of Dunoon protested against the closing of Clyde piers so, it may be said, their predecessors applauded their erection. They deplored the deserted village. They came also to deplore the overcrowding of towns and cities. Their zeal for expansion was disinterested. Since industry, unlike agriculture, was never tithed and there was no question of its being so, pecuniary considerations scarcely influenced their outlook. The feuing of glebes for factories and housing may have begun to operate but it had not assumed major proportions at the time of the Statistical Accounts; it does not enter into their computations of stipend. There was, of course, very often a friendship between ministers and the "rich men furnished with ability" who founded or controlled the mills and

whose Christian liberality though not directly affecting the beneficed clergy, was of enormous weight in matters like Church Extension and in the poor's funds administered by Kirk Sessions. Yet it was ^{from} a somewhat disinterested enthusiasm, that they sought the development of their parishes just as from patriolism they desired the greater wealth, power and enlightenment of their country: Scotland was to flourish not only by the preaching of the word but by "the collateral good of Christianity", ⁽¹⁾ the frugality, diligence and perseverance which developed her resources.

"The pattern of a civilisation is made up of two parts: the things most people and their leaders want to have done, their aims; and secondly a large number of forces and tendencies which are not "willed" but are in the momentum of civilisation. For instance, when the men of the nineteenth century set about increasing wealth, they did not will such results as the shrinking of markets or unemployment or the restrictive controls that followed". What the clergy of Scotland "willed", ⁽²⁾ the increased wealth of their people, was not ignoble; for this they clearly welcomed the Industrial Revolution.

(1) Chalmers Op.Cit. 27.

(2) Demant 'The Listener' 1950 455.

They did not "will" its many unhappy results though we have speculated that the urging of a more cautious expansion might have mitigated some of them.

There will be general agreement with their opinion that that the Revolution was a great blessing to Scotland. Ireland, experienced no such development and when famine came to her in the middle of the century she lost a million and a quarter of her people through fever and starvation.⁽¹⁾ The problem of population in the two countries, as the famine figures suggest, was entirely different. But if Scotland had nothing corresponding to this holocaust, it was in some measure due to her industry whose power of absorption must also have lessened the magnitude of the Irish disaster.

1. Handley Op.Cit. 18.

CHAPTER THREE.

CHANGING MORALITY.

The agricultural population are a simple-minded, sober, industrious and frugal race..... The manufacturing population presents a picture, in many respects, very different from this. - N.S.A. VI (Dalserf) 740.

Summary. Nostalgia for primitive simplicity: evil effects of industry both moral and economic: the reverse side of the picture of prosperity: industrial population heterogeneous - machines attract labour, from the countryside, from Ireland, from the Highlands: encouraged by men of enterprise - Dale: examples of increasing population - Paisley, Carlisle, Dundee: Dean Inge's estimate of the ethos of industrial population: two ministers fear its approach - Cathcart and Dundonald: industrial expansion not easily halted: changing morality in Greenock and Arbroath: industrial village retains community spirit and higher ethos - Eastwood, Lochwinnoch: rural population becomes more mobile and less attentive to religion: problem of parochial system in large towns: infidelity: churchless masses in Paisley, Greenock, Dundee, Barrhead.

Having observed the satisfaction of most ministers with industrial development we now take note of the nostalgia arising in certain quarters for the old Scotland that was passing away. The minister of Denny records that some could remember it as no more than "a hamlet adjoining the church containing unsophisticated, prayerful families."⁽¹⁾ It is a picture of the ancient community before its dissolution, of a community dominated by its landed families, combining piety with poverty, where the religious interest of the peasantry still bore upon itself the marks of persecution and intolerance and of the religious-political struggles of the 17th Century. The shape of many old parishes, elongated to contain both rich and poor land, had been decided with their economic self-sufficiency in view. Commerce in the modern sense broke down this isolation. There was disintegration of the local community and increasing population imposed more and more strain upon its patriarchal structure. In these circumstances we see the regret of some at the passing of the old ways.

There was more than sentiment, however, in the objection of certain ministers to the new social pattern. It had very real disadvantages. The minister of Bathgate says, "one half of the whole inhabitants of the parish are

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 124.

now, in one way or another, dependent on manufactures. We share, of course, in both the good and evil of such occupations."⁽¹⁾ The evil reputation of large establishments for the character of the people they collected round them was strong enough to make some ministers reluctant to have them within their parishes. In this the minister of Kilsyth finds consolation for the lack of industry within his parish: "It is surprising that we have no great public works of any kind. The consolation here is, that morals might not be improved by such erections and the consequent immigration."⁽²⁾

Nor was the evil confined to the moral realm. Adam Smith's prescription for the Wealth of Nations, though it worked well in its primary reference to Nations and in augmenting the average wealth, was much less satisfactory in promoting the wealth of each individual. It was a counsel for the strong. The minister of New Kilpatrick noticing that while the population had doubled, the poor roll had quadrupled, gives way to the following observation: "If a similar increase of pauperism should be found uniformly

(1) N.S.A. 2. Bathgate 168.

(2) N.S.A. VIII. Kilsyth 168.

to attend a state of manufacturing prosperity, it will form an important deduction from the addition to the sum of national happiness which such prosperity produces."⁽¹⁾

We shall return to this theme in dealing with poor relief. The traditional system of poor relief had been part of the normal functions of the clergy. It was in many ways appropriate to an agrarian economy but contained no provision for the able bodied poor. And the more industrialised the country became, the more it was rendered obsolete. For the moment we are concerned with the changing morality of the industrial population and we simply note this minister's awareness of the strange combination of manufacturing prosperity with increased pauperism. It is an important insight, hidden from many and probably but little thought of by the men of enterprise of the previous chapter. The minister of Dalkeith sounds the same note of warning: "Improvements in agriculture and manufactures, that supersede the necessity of human labour, ought to be cautiously introduced; - employment in greater variety and yielding a better remuneration, ought to be provided for female industry."⁽²⁾

(1) N.S.A. VIII. New Kilpatrick 64.

(2) N.S.A. 1. Dalkeith 533.

There was, indeed, another side to the ministers' welcome to industry; many of its results were most distressing. "The reverse side of the picture must not be concealed. The assessment for the poor has advanced tenfold. In 1791 it was £400; it is now £4,000. This, perhaps, is an evil inseparable from prosperous communities. The poor generally flock to, or are rapidly increased in them; and where multitudes are gathered together at various employments, example does not always favour economy industry and virtue." (1)

The growth of population and prosperity produced by industry had certainly its reverse side. The support and welcome so overwhelmingly given by the clergy to the Industrial Revolution must now be qualified by their acknowledgment that its blessings were not unmixed. To have a population rapidly increasing in numbers and material wealth was a development that they undoubtedly approved; to have an increased poor roll, a declining standard of health and a lowered morale amongst the people was sometimes so manifest as to be disconcerting. They were not blind to the evils both moral and physical that industry brought with it whenever it appeared on a large scale. The minister of Dundee, whom

(1) N.S.A. XI. Dundee 53.

we have just instanced, accepts this "reverse side of the picture" with a certain resignation as "inseparable from prosperous communities." He does not connect it with the Tower of Babel or with the Divine judgment upon worldly ambition. He does not show any "sense of guilt for the inevitable and inescapable pride involved in every human enterprise."⁽¹⁾ As a good statistician he simply records that all is not well in the state of Dundee. What the Marxian sees in the fore-front of the picture - the distresses, the discontent and unrest - he designates, more objectively, the reverse side. And few would have preferred the small, backward town of forty years before, to the wealthy, prosperous Dundee of the eighteen thirties, even though it had a larger area of slums.

Before enlarging upon the deterioration in morals and outlook it may be well to see how greatly the ministers were impressed by the rapid increase of population, their awareness of its causes and their sense of living in an age of unique transition. They had become pastors of a mobile and heterogeneous population with a different ethos.

"The introduction of mechanism into the manufacture of objects of desire reduced their price; the reduction of

(1) Neibuhr. op.cit. 45.

price increased the demand for them, and generally to so great an extent as to occasion more human labour to be employed AFTER the introduction of machinery than had been employed BEFORE."⁽¹⁾ This observation by Robert Owen in 1816 is paralleled in the account of Dundee which was written in 1833. "The cause of the extraordinary increase in population since 1821, (30,000-45,000 in ten years) is to be ascribed, perhaps, chiefly to the great advancement of the linen trade, which has produced so many spinning-mills, and led to the extension of the harbour; and which, by giving employment to thousands, has encouraged early marriages, as well as brought families from other parts of Scotland and Ireland."⁽²⁾ That the machine which displaces labour actually leads, in time, to a greater demand for labour may have been a commonplace by the eighteen thirties; but the Rev. George Tod of St. David's, Dundee, is strongly conscious that his parish provided a particular instance of the general law that Owen had stated.

Other ministers recognised a source of the new population in the changing condition of agriculture, for, as we have already hinted, the agricultural revolution was

(1) Owen. Quoted in Cole. op.cit. 177.

(2) N.S.A. XI. Dundee 19.

contributing greatly to the growth of towns: "The husbandry of this parish as of all the west of Scotland was about the middle of this century (the 18th) in a most unprosperous state. The indigent circumstances of the farmers, their indolent habits, the want of roads, of wheel-carriages and proper instruments of husbandry all conspired to obstruct the improvement of the soil The introduction of artificial grasses, and the culture of potatoes have produced a more diligent and accurate husbandry and banished the pernicious destruction of croft and outfield."⁽¹⁾ Where the "run rig" system was also abolished there was much rural depopulation; the farmers became fewer and less indigent.

To this changing face of agriculture the minister of Kirriemuit attributes part of the increased population of the town: "The increase of population is supposed to be owing to the policy which has of late prevailed, of converting small farms into large ones. The surplus population of country parishes being obliged in consequence to congregate in towns, Kirriemuit has received its full share of this emigration, from the increased facility for building.... and the prospect of employment which the thriving state of

(1) N.S.A. VIII. Paisley 255.

the linen manufacture held out."⁽¹⁾

There was also a drive for foreign labour, neither approved nor disapproved but simply recorded. "In 1698 an act of Parliament was passed for the further encouragement of the manufacture of ropes and cordage in Glasgow, laying a duty on all ropes imported from the Sound or east seas; and in return the company were to advance a capital of £40,000 Scots, and to bring in foreigners to the work."⁽²⁾ Presumably the foreigners were Irish. And though, as we shall soon see, the cosmopolitanism of the new industrial areas was sometimes blamed for their social deterioration there is never any hint of the need for an immigration policy to stabilise wages, to reduce the demands upon poor relief and to retain a higher physical standard in the population. To say this is, of course, to enter the realm of speculation for, without the Irish, the Industrial Revolution could not have been carried out, certainly not in the time that it actually took.

Highland clearances lie outside the scope of this survey. It is a view commonly held that the methods employed, the incentives to the crofters to emigrate, were by no means

(1) N.S.A. XI. Kirriemuit 179.

(2) N.S.A. VI. Glasgow 135.

creditable to a civilised country. Seeing they followed very quickly upon Cumberland's excesses after Culloden and when some people still alive, must have remembered the Massacre of Glencoe, we can only say that barbarism has lessened. There is truth in Trevelyan's assertion that given but the roads and the prospect of settlement elsewhere, many Highlanders were likely to seek better conditions than the glens could provide.⁽¹⁾ At any rate, the welcome they received in the Lowlands was not accorded to them as unfortunate refugees but as a useful addition to the supply of labour. Some of them were shrewdly diverted from America to meet the needs of Glasgow. And the tendency to regard men as units and hands is traceable in the Glasgow account of their arrival: "The increase of Roman Catholics in Glasgow may be dated from 1791. At that time the spirit for emigration from the North Highlands to America was such as to drain the country of many of its best labourers. The services of these hardy Northlanders being required at home, Messrs George McIntosh, David Dale, Robert Dalglish, and other extensive manufacturers invited them to this city, and to such as were Roman Catholics, security was promised in the exercise of their religion."⁽²⁾

(1) Trevelyan. op.cit. 448.

(2) N.S.A. VI. Glasgow 194.

Amongst the merchant princes who sponsored this immigration was David Dale, the father-in-law of Robert Owen. Scotland was rich in this type of business genius and they were a most potent factor in increasing the industrial population. Dale, according to some of his contemporaries was the prototype of Sir Walter Scott's Baillie Nicol Jarvie. He induced Arkwright to visit Scotland and founded the mills at New Lanark . "With extensions they were by 1793 the largest of their kind in Great Britain, with 1300 employees, including many formerly destitute men and women from various parts of Scotland whom Dale fed, clothed, housed and trained. He was perhaps the pioneer of industrial welfare, and inaugurated many of the schemes usually associated with the name of his son-in-law Robert Owen."⁽¹⁾

Like Mr. Dunn of Duntocher and the Bairds of Gartsherrie, the merchant princes were often closely associated with ministers. Owen had great difficulty in contacting Dale to ask ~~him~~ for the hand of his daughter; on weekdays the latter would visit his various factories, on Sundays he preached.⁽²⁾

Though a Dissenter, the parish ministers have nothing but good to say of him. At Blantyre where he also founded the

(1) Oakley. op.cit. 38.

(2) Owen. op.cit. 86

mills he is "the pious David Dale";⁽¹⁾ at Lanark he is "Mr. Dale whose humanity is ever awake". His mills are praised: "Large factories have sometimes been considered in another light but Mr. Dale, and all concerned, must have the voice of the public to the contrary."⁽²⁾ As we have shown, men of such enterprise were regarded as benefactors. Their invitation to all and sundry to become employees shows either a wide philanthropy or a religious prejudice overborne by economic interest.

In the first thirty years of the century many parishes doubled their population. The clergy not only record this, but they are aware that it was unprecedented in the history of Scotland. "Compared with its state when the statistical account was published, forty-five years ago, Paisley has made an astonishing progress..... Its population has nearly trebled. Its public buildings, its private dwelling-houses, its streets, its whole appearance as a town indicate the advance of wealth, of refinement and of public spirit."⁽³⁾

Astonishing progress was the rule wherever industry made its appearance; hamlets became towns and towns became

(1) N.S.A. Blantyre 322.

(2) O.S.A. ~~XV~~. Lanark 38.

(3) N.S.A. VII. Paisley 300.

cities. That sudden upsurge of population, which led Malthus to the scientific study of its laws, appeared throughout the midland belt of Scotland. Parishes which had changed little since the Reformation became centres of a teeming population, transforming their very character. For the full impact of this increase upon the minds of ministers, we offer, finally, the illustrations of Carluke and Dundee where, respectively, a hamlet became a town, and a town attained the proportions of a city."⁽¹⁾

The village of Carluke has within a few years swelled into the size and assumed the appearance of a thriving town - its present population amounting to 2125..... There is still alive one individual (if not more) who remembers since the village of Carluke contained only four cottages with the Kirk and Manse."

The reminiscences of individuals are also used to bring vividness to the account of the growth of Dundee. "In population, manufactures, and trade; in the luxury, and comfort which prevail, Dundee has perhaps advanced faster than any similar town in the kingdom. There are men alive in it who remember when its population was only ONE-FIFTH of what it is now; when its harbour was a crooked wall,

(1) N.S.A. VI. Carluke 591.

often enclosing but a few fishing or smuggling craft; when its spinning-mills were things unknown and unthought of; and its trade hardly worthy of the name."⁽¹⁾

It has been questioned whether the human organism is well adapted to the life of the large industrial areas. "Ancient civilisations imported their barbarians: we breed our own." Very early the ministers discerned that changing ethos of the industrial population which is the basis of Dean Inge's sharp comment and constitutes one of his favourite themes: "If we consider what are the chief centres of discontent throughout the civilised world, we shall find that they are the great aggregations of population in wealthy industrial countries. Social unrest is a disease of town life.... The inhabitants of the large town do not envy the countryman and would not change with him. But unknown to themselves they are leading an unnatural life, cut off from the kindly and wholesome influences of nature, surrounded by vulgarity and ugliness with no traditions, no loyalties, no culture and no religion.... The life of the town artisan who works in a factory is a life to which the human organism has not adapted itself; it is an unwholesome and unnatural

(1) N.S.A. XI. Dundee 53.

condition. Hence, probably, comes the malaise which makes him think that any radical change must be for the better."⁽¹⁾

This melancholy statement with regard to so great a portion of humanity is to some extent corroborated by the Clergy. It is an extreme statement bearing both the power and the weakness of a generalisation. The clergy knew that all was not well; but they were satisfied that the changes which had taken place were on balance an improvement on what had gone before. Unrest did not commence with industry. Medievalism stood for unrest⁽²⁾ and an alien faith. It held no charm. Memories of the persecution of the Covenanters were a very lively tradition⁽³⁾ in the West of Scotland. The ministers knew "the pernicious distinction of croft and outfield" and the poverty it signified;⁽⁴⁾ the age of hand labour had been an age of serfdom in the mines.⁽⁵⁾ When they refer to 1707 it is nearly always to record the beginnings of some commercial enterprise, as though it were surmised that, with the ending of an old feud, the battle against indigence had begun. The evils of industry are measured against the

(1) Inge. op.cit. 206.

(2) N.S.A. VI. 378. Chief characteristics....
were ignorance and a fierce sanguinary spirit.

(3) N.S.A. VI. 265, 298, 304.

(4) N.S.A. VII. 255.

(5) N.S.A. VI. 378.

recurring famines of which Fletcher of Saltoun spoke and of which Ireland was yet to feel the worst visitations; they are only the reverse side of a picture of expansion and prosperity that was thoroughly entrancing.

We have already remarked the absence of any prophetic voices, warning against the evils latent in every ambitious human project. Since the passing of Woodrow and his generation there does not seem to have been much denunciation of the sin of "too great fondness for trade", and, indeed, such denunciation, achieving its purpose, would have continued the economic impoverishment of the country. When the flood of invention had begun, were there any who feared the advent of industry, who urged a restraint in the ruthlessness of expansion and a greater respect for personality in the conditions of employment? In this respect the suggestion of the minister of Dalkeith that machines should be cautiously introduced, is the only direct utterance. If acted upon, it would have reduced the numbers and modified the hardships of the displaced, and a more leisurely industrialisation would have given more time for reflection upon the problem of the mal employed and overworked; the sum of material wealth would also have grown more slowly. But this Dalkeith minister is something

of a lone voice. With one or two others he has forebodings of the inhumanities that the machines brought with them - in fact he has seen them already.

The great majority of the clergy were not sensitive to the dangers of industry in anything like the degree that they were conscious of its blessings. The conclusion which one cannot escape drawing from the statistical accounts is that while covetousness bulks largely in the prophetic mind as the vice par excellence, with the clergy it is a vice so mitigated by enterprise as scarcely to receive rebuke. It is only rebuked when, in combination with sloth, it appears in the working population and becomes a bar to enterprise.

patopia *Bois*
~~patopia~~ has eclipsed ~~upis~~ as the primal sin.

There are two interesting exceptions to this generalisation. If the previous chapter more or less proves that the conservatism associated with churches did not extend, in Scotland, to the change from agriculture to industry, it would be surprising to find only one mind amongst a body of men so various. The exceptions which are said to prove the rule are provided by the ministers of Cathcart and Dundonald; for instead of looking forward to industrial undertakings they are happy to be exempt from them - displaying either a

Rechabite conservatism or a prophetic impulse: "The erection of a cotton mill on the Cart, whose machinery might be propelled by its waters, has occasionally been contemplated; but the idea seems of late to be abandoned very much to the gratification of the writer, who has cause to congratulate himself that none of the public works now existing has been the means of introducing that sort of promiscuous and floating population which is so apt from its irresponsible character, to demoralise a neighbourhood." (1)

The minister of Dundonald too, is decidedly conservative in his preference for the old simple ways: "The parish, and we think happily, is still free from factories of every kind; the attempt (to found one) referred to in the former account having completely failed. And as a lover of those among whom one would choose to dwell, one would say, long may such attempts continue to fail! For while agriculture and the kindred arts are favourable alike to the physical and moral health, there is obviously something in such employments destructive of both. And if experience has proved them to be injurious to men, they are a cruel bondage and degradation to the feebler sex. It is enough to make one's heart sick

to look upon their wasted figures and colourless countenances, when compared with those who labour for their immediate bread in the pure light of day. But this evil, we fear, is, from the nature of things, without hope of remedy. The moral one, however, may be prevented; and should the root of it at any time be transplanted into this district, we trust that a moral and spiritual education will also keep pace with it, that the people may at least sink no lower, or become worse than they are."⁽¹⁾

These, then, are the most explicit protests against industrialisation that have come to our notice. The ministers concerned are rather unique in despising new sources of employment. The gratification of the minister of Cathcart that what he saw in Glasgow did not yet afflict his parish is to his credit. He is content with the industries already existing for they have not yet proved socially destructive.

The minister of Dundonald provides an interesting light on the mind of the times when he states that the technological change unlike the moral change is an evil "without hope of remedy". How far was this true? Certain landlords had, no doubt, prohibited the erection of mills

(1) N.S.A. V. Dundonald 688.

as others had facilitated their entrance or had been themselves their founders. But the Industrial Revolution itself had the nature of a tide in the affairs of men which it seemed more possible for them to hasten than to hinder. To stand still was to be surrounded by the flood. The lack of industry had the effect of depriving some places of their men of resource and talent: "Trade and manufactures which have so enriched several places in the neighbourhood, appear to have had the effect of impoverishing Renfrew."⁽¹⁾

The Rev. Patrick McFarlan, D.D., of the West Parish, Greenock, who is borne along with the stream of progress and would like to see it running faster, is conscious that there is a more fundamental progress which industry cannot guarantee and from which it may even detract: "When the whole of the falls shall be possessed and manufactories erected on both lines (of water courses), events perhaps not far distant, there will be one of the most singular spectacles presented to the eye which it is possible to imagine. There will be seen from the river, or from its opposite bank, an immense crescent or semicircle of manufactories.....

Whether the increase of our manufactories by these means

(1) N.S.A. VII. Renfrew 18.

will add to the good morals and real happiness of the people is another and an infinitely more important question."⁽¹⁾

Here we have the expression of a high level of Christian concern. An emphatic and satisfactory distinction is drawn between different types of progress and in spite of the manifest delight in the prospect of material advance there is no mistaking the bias of the pastoral mind. He knows that "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."⁽²⁾ He believes, however, that "good morals and real happiness" will be secured by plans for education though these seldom fulfilled their promise. "The compiler is happy to learn that the managers of the cotton-works..... have made it part of their plan to provide sound religious instruction on a truly liberal scale to the persons, especially the young, whom they expect to receive into their employment. It is devoutly to be wished that the proprietors of similar establishments would follow their example."⁽³⁾ No doubt performance fell far short of these pious hopes. But even had there been no promise of education who could have stayed the tide of economic change? Only a theocracy which would

(1) N.S.A. VII. Greenock 437.

(2) Romans 14. 17.

(3) N.S.A. VII. Greenock 437.

have had its own problems.

We could scarcely find a record of material growth with an accompanying moral and religious decline more tersely stated than in the account of St. Vigeans, a suburb of Arbroath: "Since the last Statistical Account was written, the population has nearly doubled, the landed rental tripled, the staple manufactures of the suburbs of Arbroath - the spinning of flax yarn by machinery - has been created, the thrashing-mills are tenfold in number and power, the turnip and potato husbandry immeasurably extended, the fishing boats of Auchmithie doubled. No proprietor then kept a four-wheeled carriage; now seven do so. The dress, food, and accommodation of all classes are much superior; what were foreign luxuries then, have now become necessities. The funds for the support of the poor were then £70, now they are £700; the former sum was then accepted with humble thanks, the latter sum is craved with murmuring. Loyalty, according to the writer of that day, was fresh and vigorous, now the suspicion of all power lies deep and rankling. Parents then supported their children, now multitudes of children prove the support of their father's family. To be without the profession of religion was then a contemptible singularity, now it is very common, and little marked

(1) N.S.A. XI. St. Vigeans 517.

If the changes here, are added together - ingratitude for public relief, suspicion of authority, parents depending upon child-labour and blatant irreligion - they constitute a formidable array of evidence against the new social structure, and a serious counterpoise to the recorded improvement in dress, food and accommodation. Nearly a century before Goldsmith had moralised in very similar terms:

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

This clergyman has an obvious distaste for many features of the industrial set up; the obverse side of the picture is almost as disagreeable as the front is pleasing. Nor is he a mere laudator temporis acti, for he cites the railways recently opened as "conferring inestimable advantage.... on the county generally."⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless these same advantages had had a very mixed effect upon the habits of the people.

We are precluded from thinking this deterioration inevitable because some smaller places record both better morals and better trade. As we shall see later, the changed ethos was often connected with the lack of pastoral oversight and of church accommodation upon which the increased population

(1) N.S.A. XI. St. Vigean 513.

had placed an intolerable strain. Church extension was one of the remedies deemed most necessary by the clergy to meet the new situation. For the moment, we dwell upon their insight into the social changes that were taking place, their distaste for many aspects of industrial life and their sense that, in this great transition both good and ill were strangely mixed. They were not at ease in Zion.

Before presenting, therefore, some final illustrations of the alarm of the church at the estrangement of much of the new population from the Christian tradition, we take note of places where a moderate degree of industry was not unfavourable to morality. We have cited the minister of Cathcart as satisfied that the works already existing, because of their limited extent, had not brought the evils he saw elsewhere. He realised a limit to healthy expansion, drawing the line at a cotton mill. In other growing villages the higher subsistence level produced by industry seemed generally advantageous: "the comfort and intelligence of the people keep pace with their numbers."⁽¹⁾

Avoiding the evils of great aggregation, the parish of Eastwood with 6000 of a population distributed in villages

(1) N.S.A. VI. Blantyre 326.

gives ground to the following observation. "With respect to their effects on health and morals, a master of one of these public works writes thus, 'From all I can learn, the health and morals of persons employed in well-conducted manufacturing establishments are greatly superior to what they are in other districts of the county. The regular and abundant food, and comparatively comfortable lodging, more than compensate for the less frequent exposure to the open air, and the greater duration of labour; and the means we possess of knowing and checking open vice, have, I believe, a powerful effect in suppressing it.'"⁽¹⁾ This is an employer's report. The better morals in the works of the neighbourhood may have been less due to the strict oversight of which he boasted than to the absence of the malaise of a great industrial area. Industry did little to alter values till it destroyed the sense of community.

Thus in Lochwinnoch the minister was not unduly perturbed about the effect of the mills for he had in his parish a manageable proposition in pastoral care and church accommodation. "In a manufacturing place like this a great deal of ignorance and immorality may be expected. But the

(1) N.S.A. VII. Eastwood 41.

managers of the public works have always much to their credit, been very careful about the character of the persons whom they employ..... They are in a remarkable manner a church going people. There is hardly any such thing as infidelity, or even heresy, in the parish and those who are suspected of bad principles are regarded with such feelings as to prevent them from doing much injury to those around them."⁽¹⁾ Here are conditions agreeable to community spirit and well adapted to the permeation of Christian values. The picture is by no means a dark one.

While the unregulated growth of towns beyond a certain limit broke the spirit of community, the cosmopolitanism of even smaller places militated against a strong communal life. The haphazard combination of very different types of people was something new and could be distasteful: "The lime, coal and clay works at Garnkirk, have collected a very considerable population of such a description as is found about newly erected public works."⁽²⁾ For the first time since the Reformation, Romanism brought cleavage amongst the working population and one much deeper than any created by the Secessions. Infidelity made its

(1) N.S.A. VII. Lochwinnoch 99.

(2) N.S.A. VI. Cadder 408.

appearance, not as previously amongst the cultured like David Hume but amongst the very humblest people. The inadequacy of the old parochial system to cope with the increased numbers meant a large unchurched population and a religious indifference that was new to Scotland. The minister of Cathcart rightly dreaded "the promiscuous and floating population" for it was a great problem to the church. Offering scope for a plenteous harvest, it was nevertheless intractable ground and the labourers were few.

Trevelyan speaks of Calvinism and the Covenanted spirit as something "which transformed the Lowland Scot into the best educated peasant in Europe." If one may judge, however, from the Statistical Accounts and the low estimate formed by the clergy of subsistence farming, they were also amongst the poorest. Until the agricultural revolution they had the religious advantages of a static population - with settled ordinances of worship and a continuity of pastoral supervision. But with the change in farming methods there came that frequency of removals, now one of their main characteristics and a great detriment to their religion. We can find evidence of this change in the saying of Chalmers that in the Scotland of fifty years before, poverty was not unknown but pauperism was unknown.⁽¹⁾ It was a change of spirit.

(1) Chalmers. op,cit. 27.

In places untouched by industry, religion had less hold than before: "It is, however, to be lamented, that many of the farm-servants, having been bred from their boyish days in bothies, are but coarse and clownish in their manners. The competition for farms, and the consequent high rents, compel many of the masters to exact from their servants, severe and rough toil in all kinds of weather; and it must be evident, that such exertions are scarcely consistent with much refinement of manners or much intellectual cultivation. Besides, the universal habit in farm servants of frequently changing their abode, is not favourable to their religious improvement and demeanour."⁽¹⁾

In all probability this floating rural population, accustomed to bothies, contributed most to the new industrial centres. With the Irish, the English and the Highlanders they flocked to the developing areas and changed the existing pattern of social life: "The population being at present, as it were, in the very state of transition, presents an interesting subject of observation to those accustomed to study the formation or change of general character, but, at the same time, precludes anything like a decided statement upon the subject. The native inhabitants till recently

(1) N.S.A. XI. St, Vigean 498.

possessed, and, to a great degree do still retain, much of that intelligence, and sterling though unpolished integrity, which are supposed to constitute a main feature of the unsophisticated Scottish character. Mingled, however, with this patriarchal steadiness of principle is a considerable portion of that character's other ingredient - a certain knowing shrewdness, which while it would scorn an actual breach of honesty or morality, is apt, sometimes to sail so very near the wind, as apparently to place strict honour in danger.

The recent improvements in the parish and extensive introduction of strangers, whilst they are obviously producing a higher polish, and a greater activity of mind are as obviously bringing along with them much of the profligacy and lowness of principle so frequently found in more advanced society."⁽¹⁾

If "profligacy and lowness of principle" were noticeably on the increase in a parish which had still the population of a large village and where it could be only a matter of time before the sense of community with its profound moral sanctions reasserted itself, the change that came over

(1) N.S.A. VI. Carlisle 586.

large aggregations of population constituted the very gravest social problem. Sir Walter Scott spoke of "the lazy dross of a metropolis."⁽¹⁾ We therefore turn our attention to the "degraded masses", to the large concentrations of people attracted by industry and so rapidly augmented as to render the old parochial system obsolete: "That beautiful parochial economy, which the fathers of the Scottish Reformation handed down as a most precious boon to their successors has become in this (Paisley) as in all our large communities, little more than a shadow."⁽²⁾

An ecclesiastical census carried out in Paisley served to emphasise the greatness of this problem. The ministers feared that in this census many claimed a church connection who in fact had none; they felt that the social-religious situation in the down-town areas was worse than the figures suggested: "We strongly fear that the numbers (recorded without a church connection) fell considerably short of those degraded masses of corrupt society which are sunk in all the darkness of a state of practical atheism."⁽³⁾

We have already indicated the tendency of the

(1) Lockhart. op.cit. vol.5. 225.

(2) N.S.A. VII. Paisley 304.

(3) N.S.A. VII. Paisley 229.

Glasgow Account to give prominence to the mechanisation by which Glasgow flourished. There is, on the other hand, a serious omission of any description of its social conditions, its poverty and slums. This, however, is in some way compensated by the attention given to social deterioration in the accounts of industrial areas like Greenock. "It is deeply to be lamented, that as we descend in the (social) scale we meet with the most mournful signs of moral deterioration - infidelity shedding its baleful influence over the minds and habits of the poor; intemperance laying waste their bodily frame, and destroying the peace of their families, and both together inducing a habitual disregard of the Sabbath day and a sullen contempt for the house of God, and the truths and solemn obligations of Christianity. If there be any truth in the descriptions given of the character of our Scottish peasantry and artisans fifty or a hundred years ago, the change which has taken place during that period is such as to awaken the sorrow, and to call forth the enlightened zeal and beneficence of every friend of religion and of his fellow men." (1)

Whether it was its breach with authority or the social dislocation it caused in Glasgow the American War is

(1) N.S.A. VII. Greenock 429.

cited for the beginnings of infidelity. "About the time of the American War politics and infidelity began to be introduced."⁽¹⁾ But more often it is French infidelity that is blamed as socially disruptive. "When we look at Paisley in a moral and religious view we have our hopes mingled with many fears. Since the last Statistical Account was published, the religious character of the place has much deteriorated. French infidelity and Sunday drilling combined with other causes to poison the principles and relax the habits of the rising generation; while the rage for political reading and speculation abstracted the minds of the operatives from the more profitable but less exacting matters of religion and the Bible."⁽²⁾

The effect of factory life upon morality, negligible in small areas, was alarming in places like Dundee: "As to the influence of our manufactures on morals, it is to be regretted that wherever multitudes of human beings congregate good morals are endangered."⁽³⁾ For one thing the new "juxtaposition"⁽⁴⁾ of great numbers of workers in crowded

(1) N.S.A. VI. Hamilton 293.

(2) N.S.A. VII. Paisley 304.

(3) N.S.A. XI. Dundee 29.

(4) N.S.A. XI. St. Vigeans 503.

mills was in complete contrast to the old home industries. For another, the indiscriminate herding of old and young for long hours in close proximity brought about the contagion of evil example. "By this invention (flax spinning) the wealth of many individuals has been much increased, the trade now being carried on to a much greater extent than what could possibly have been done in the old way of hand spinning. It is a question, however, whether the invention has contributed to the improvement of the morals of those employed. Aware of the demoralising tendency of such great works, not a few of the masters have introduced schools into them at which the labourers may have the benefit of education; and in some there are also Sabbath schools."⁽¹⁾

Between 1780 and 1830 "the cotton industry sprang up rapidly to the position of Scotland's premier industry."⁽²⁾ It was naturally the chief medium of this moral decline. We have noted that it was feared by the minister of Cathcart and that Paisley, where it was the staple industry - making it for a time the third town in Scotland⁽³⁾ - had also its "degraded masses". The minister of Barrhead's opinion may

(1) N.S.A. XI. Dundee 18.

(2) Hamilton. op.cit. 1.

(3) N.S.A. VII. 199.

now be taken as a final appraisal of its effects. With a population expanded within forty years from roughly 2000 to 9,000, he sees, through the rapidity of expansion all the malaise of a great industrial area and nothing will suffice him but a radical change. His concern is almost that of Disraeli: "There is no community.... there is aggregation, but aggregation in circumstances which make it rather a dissociating than a uniting principle..... Christianity teaches us to love our neighbours..... but modern society acknowledges no neighbours." With the parish church of Neilston seating 830 the minister has to teach 9,187 souls to love their neighbours. The great proportion are "warmly attached to the Establishment", but he feels the incongruity of the situation. Industry has brought great loss as well as gain; wealth and productivity have been increased but at too great a cost in human welfare. With his emphatic exposure of the factory system, we conclude this survey of moral change and decline.

"In a parish abounding with cotton-mills, printfields and bleachfields, where men and woman and children are cooped up together from five in the morning till seven at night;

where indecent language is often heard, and evil example often set before them; where no opportunity is afforded the children to acquire solid knowledge and where time is wanting for the adults to improve their minds by reading and reflection how is it possible that such a population can in general be intellectual moral and religious? If we are to enjoy a healthy state of morals, the present and future generations must be trained up in the fear of the Lord and obedience to his Commandments. If these are neglected every generation will grow worse and worse, till society become wholly corrupted and debased, and we sink as a moral and religious people from among the nations of the earth. Indeed a radical change must take place through all branches of the COTTON trade, where, at present, children are employed, if we are to become an intellectual, moral and religious people. Government must interfere - our old religious system of education must return - children must be taught, and none permitted to enter into any of these works below the age of twelve or fourteen years, and until they have learned to read their Bible and say their Catechism."⁽¹⁾

(1) N.S.A. VII. Neilston 332.

CHAPTER FOUR.

CHANGING STANDARDS OF LIVING.

It cannot be denied, that in regard to intelligence, the arts and comforts of Social life, general habits and appearance, the people have for a good while past been steadily advancing, and have advanced, amid all complaints to the contrary, in a ratio fully equal to that of the increase of the population N.S.A. VI Dalserf 764.

Summary. Carlyle commends pastoral devotion; industrial revolution raises standard of living: coal mining: Alloa;- miners slaves until 1775: women bearers replaced by mechanical transport: Tranent:- houses uncomfortable: drunkenness: good wages: Paisley:- accidents in pits: Newton:- ill-health of miners: Carron Iron Works: improved housing: improved diet: general use of white bread, potatoes, bacon, tea: good houses being built: town planning, Edinburgh, Grangemouth, Laurieston: Declining standards through overcrowding and poverty, Renfrew, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Greenock, Declining health in factories, Barrhead, Paisley, Falkirk, Lochwinnoch: insurance for industrial accident foreshadowed. Losses and gains of industrial worker in Campsie.

"In thrifty Scotland itself, in Glasgow or Edinburgh

City, in their dark lanes, hidden from all but the eye of God, and of rare Benevolence the minister of God, there are scenes of woe and destitution and desolation, such as, one may hope, the Sun never saw before in the most barbarous regions where men dwelt"(1) Written in 1843, Carlyle's observation admits of two interpretations. Either amongst the orders of Society he selects the ministry for special praise or amongst the clergy themselves he sees some "of rare Benevolence", distinguished from the rest by their penetration into those scenes of misery and squalor which others were not careful to investigate. In all probability Carlyle meant to praise the clergy as a whole for their acquaintance with conditions too readily ignored by other sections of Society, Coming from a somewhat detached contemporary this is high tribute to the seriousness with which the clergy of that day applied themselves to the pastoral task. We have noted what the Statistical Accounts describe as "moral deterioration" in the large new centres of population. We now turn to their sensitiveness to the hard physical conditions amidst which so many people lived and worked, to the environment produced, as is often thought, by a relentless devil take the hindmost economic theory, off-set by some kind of opiate

(1) Carlyle: Op. cit. 3.

supplied by the clergy.

In the clerical mind with its aporeciation of enterprise and its view of things as they were, and as they had previously been, there was not that immediate association of evil social conditions with early industrialism that there is today. They saw both improvement and decline; they welcomed industry while deploring some of its results. The widespread impression that the Industrial Revolution brought increasing drudgery and insecurity for the many, with benefits for the few, must be corrected by the fact that it did in many instances lighten labour and bring a better standard of livelihood to that large proportion of the population always living so near the starvation level and actually starving in the lean years. If industrial employment was precarious so was the harvest of the primitive crofter. Poverty, however, became like population more concentrated and therefore more obvious, and, divorced from its rural setting, more appalling in its results. But there can be no gainsaying that the advent of the small industrial town was a distinct social gain for Scotland. In many places there was no decline in popular well being but a perceptible change for the better. "I am satisfied that the inhabitants of Lochwinnoch have for

a considerable time past been more comfortably provided for than those of places where there are no mills".⁽¹⁾ A statement like this disposes of the inevitable connection that has sometimes been postulated, between early industry and exploitation.

The humanitarianism blossoming so richly from evangelical roots in Wilberforce and Shaftesbury is by no means absent from the Church of Scotland though it never reached the crusading zeal devoted to ecclesiastical issues. But when a Statistical Account, contemplating the depression of weavers observes that "the ~~axe~~ must be laid to the root of the tree"⁽²⁾ and another calls for "radical change"⁽³⁾ in the cotton industry, the ministry can scarcely be described as reactionary or even accused of complacency toward the social injustice of the period. Their degree of awareness to social reproach was inevitably varied by temperament and by their immediate surroundings but we do not look in vain amongst them for that rare benevolence which Carlyle ascribes to some or all of them.

We propose, therefore, to look first at the changes the Industrial Revolution brought to the mining villages of

(1) N.S.A. VII: 104

(2) Page 180.

(3) Page 109.

Alloa and Tranent where coal had been dug for generations; for a reference to the "col-pots of Tranent" shows them to be famous at the time of the "Three Estates". We join with this a study of the transformation wrought in East Stirlingshire by the Carron Iron Works.

The full development of coal mining and heavy industry awaited in Scotland as whole (as we have seen in the case of Cambusnethan) the expansion of the railway system. During the first forty years of the 19th Century it is only in its early stages. "Till very lately (1839) the outcroppings only of the Castlehill first and Carluke seams have been wrought, so that, in a sense, the Carluke coal basin, and the field to the South and West of it are untouched."⁽¹⁾ To the second half of the century we must attribute most of the "miner's rows" which have been such a profound source of embitterment. But in the early stages of the development of the mines - so closely linked with the grimness and inhumanity of industry - mechanisation brought a decrease of drudgery and, where there was as yet no social legislation, technical progress was abolishing female labour. On the other hand, as the industry expanded, the number of children employed went on increasing till restricted by law.

In mining parishes the sensitiveness of ministers

(1) N.S.A. VI. 568.

to the conditions amid which people lived and worked, appears in the consciousness that this particular industry was accompanied by great social degradation. It appears also, however, in the well founded belief that conditions had actually improved. In Alloa, for example, the minister recalls with thankfulness the abolition of the slavery of former days.

"Of all the slavery under heavens canopy (the African slavery as it was in the West Indies ~~excepted~~), this was the most cruel and oppressive, both as regards body and mind, and wherever this system exists, the condition of the collier and his family is most lamentable, - it is a bar to any improvement or comfort whatever. As the collieries in this parish extended this oppressive slavery became evidently worse, and the late most worthy and excellent John Francis Earl of Mar, with a benevolence and philanthropy which does honour to his memory, ordered this system to be completely abolished.

The evils attending this system may in some degree be estimated, when it is stated that when his Lordship put and end to it, 50,000 tons of coal were raised at his collieries annually, every ounce of which was carried by

women. Iron railways and tramcars with four wheeled carriages, are now substituted, to the great comfort of the miner, his family and all concerned with the collieries.

Before its abolition, the very name collier was a reproach. But since that event, the colliers have risen in the scale of society, and now form a very respectable class." (1)

Perhaps the coal owner here receives credit, as a benevolent despot, for carrying out the provisions of the Act of 1775 before the Act of 1799 made them fully effective; but his introduction of steam power has been just as important in abating some of the most terrible forms of labour:

"Until within these thirty years (i.e. in 1800) all the coals in this parish were brought from the wall face or foreheads of the mines by women, married and unmarried, old and young; these were known by the name of bearers. When the pit was deep, they brought the coals to the pit bottom; but when the pits did not exceed 18 fathoms, they carried the coals to the bank at the pit head by a stair. A stout woman carried in general from 100 to 200 weight, and, in a

(1) N.S.A.:IX.33.

trial of strength, 300 weight imperial."(1)

In Tranent also conditions have improved:

"Among a population of colliers it cannot be expected that the habits of the people should be cleanly; and the injurious practice of women working in the pits as bearers (now happily on the decline with the married females) tends to render the houses of colliers most uncomfortable on their return from their labours, and to foster many evils which a neat cleanly home would go far to lessen. Colliers from their high wages, generally partake of the best butcher-meat and may be said to live well, but unfortunately they indulge very freely in ardent spirits, - that bane of the ~~the~~ working population."(2)

There is no attempt here to overlook or disguise an acute social problem. It is fairly stated and its causes are not regarded as financial, for the wages are high. Its causes are traced to moral weakness, aggravated, no doubt, by the conditions amid which the men lived and worked. But the writer can look back to the bad old days before his time and is confident and gratified that things are not so bad as they were. It is much the same tale as the Alloa minister has given us: "Until the middle of last century, the greater part of the

(1) N.S.A. IX Alloa: 29.

(2) N.S.A. II Tranent: 295.

population of this parish, consisting of colliers and salters, were little better than slaves, being bound to their works for life, and after having engaged in them after the years of puberty, were not permitted to leave their employment, unless the trade was given up. This cruel practice was happily done away with in 1775, but the evil effects of it were not so easily overcome. A class thus nurtured in bondage, enjoying little intercourse with others, and their religious instruction not much attended to, could hardly have been expected to keep pace with the civilisation of the country. The vice of drunkenness spread its pernicious influence very widely among them and though families frequently make about £2 per week they rarely lay by any of their wages, and have not their dwelling-houses so comfortably furnished as the farm servants who do not earn half the amount."⁽¹⁾

There is no reference to the overcrowding of houses, or of people within them, latterly so legitimate a grievance of the mining population. And certainly the Report on "Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population in Scotland"² presents a much graver situation than could

(1) "I have seen horses in two houses in Tranent inhabiting the same apartment with numerous families. The horse stood at the back of the bed." Quoted Handley Op.Cit.214.

(2) N.S.A. II. Tranent: 294.

ever be gathered from this Account. But double that remuneration, which afforded a fair degree of comfort to the agricultural worker, produced, in the writer's view, and through an evil tradition, conditions of squalor in Tranent. There were however, exceptions who were proof against their environment. "From the above remarks, it is evident that the mass of the people cannot be said to be intellectual, moral or religious. There are, however, several marked exceptions; and it is to be hoped, that the present exertions making for the diffusion of religious knowledge in the parish may, by the blessing of God, have a favourable effect on the character of the inhabitant."⁽¹⁾

There is no mention of the profits that were being made out of the mines. Whether this is significant for the writer's outlook cannot be determined. For profits were no doubt fluctuating and obscure and the social consciousness which has focussed attention upon them had not yet arisen. The minister's own stipend is well above the average at £349, but the minister of the neighbouring quoad Sacra parish of Cockenzie has only £80 which is some £20 less than the income of a miner's house. The miner is happily free from the slave

(1) N.S.A. II. 295.

status of former days and his wife less frequently works in the mines but the evil heritage of former days remains in squalor and drunkenness. There is much improvidence and much misery. In this account of one of the more developed mining regions we have sympathy for the downtrodden tempered by the fact that many, being their own worst enemies, had added to their burdens. The problem seemed to be more one of morals than economics; it is a religious cure that is prescribed.

Another omission from this report seems to be the higher incidence of ill-health and accident amongst miners as compared with other workers. It was however, also a parish of fisherfolk. Their sufferings may have been more spectacular, and the freshness of their hazards may have prompted their inclusion in the Account: "A few years ago several of the men endured all the rigours of a Polar winter, the ships having been encircled with ice in Baffin's Bay. Their sufferings were dreadful and it is remarkable that so far from the sufferings of their friends having the effect of deterring any from this dangerous employment, a young man volunteered to go in one of the earliest vessels to search for his relatives, and he had the inexpressible delight of

being in the first boat that boarded the ship in which were his father and others connected with him." (1)

We turn now from Tranent where no mining disasters are recorded to find references elsewhere to the hardships of the miner. In Paisley the dangers of the occupation are amply recognised." The Hurlet mines at one time contained inflammable air, and through the negligence of some of the workmen in not using the necessary precautions, several valuable lives have been lost. Such accidents, however, are now in great measure dissipated by the free circulation of atmospheric air through the waste, and the numerous pits or shafts communicating with each other". There is another instance [^] recorded where five men lost their lives through flooding. But even in the matter of mining risks there is an impression that things are better than they were.

The Rev. ^{James} ~~Thomas~~ Lapslie of Campsie draws attention to the need for accurate coal charts to lessen the risk of breaking through into old seams. Characteristically enough (for we shall enlarge later upon his social outlook) he thought the miners too highly paid in relation to other

workers: "Many lives might be saved which are unfortunately lost by the workmen striking through upon old waste, as was the case in February, 1789 when five colliers were killed in the newk coal-pit of Campsie. I consider the wages of colliers, as by no means in proportion to the wages of other labourers in the parish, the labourer having only sixteen pence per day. Allowing the collier a third more on account of danger and the disagreeable nature of his work, viz. two shillings, then there would be one third of the wages which he receives at present, saved to the public".⁽¹⁾

The disease of the lungs to which the miner is peculiarly subject was so prevalent in the parish of Newton near Dalkeith that it constitutes the only note on health in the whole Account. "The collier population is subject to a peculiar disease which is vulgarly called the black-spit and, by the faculty, is dignified with the Greek term melanosis. It is a wasting of the lungs occasioned, as is supposed, by the inhaling of the coal-dust while working, and the expectoration is as black as the coal itself. Many strong men are cut off by it before they reach the age of forty, especially if they have, for any length of time, been

(1) O.S.A. XV: 376.

engaged in what in opposition to coal-hewing is called stone-work, (sinking of pits, driving of mines, etc.) Almost all the men are affected by it sooner or later, so as to be rendered unfit for any active exertion for years before they drop prematurely into the grave, between the ages of forty and sixty or sixty-five. The vicissitudes of temperature to which they are daily exposed on issuing from the pits throughout a great part of the year, coupled with irregular habits in the case of too many, no doubt contributes to this mortality."⁽¹⁾

This minister enlarges too upon the discontent and unsettlement of the miners, placing them as some others have done at the very lowest in the social scale, as though the very nature of the occupation had served to perpetuate the marks of their prolonged serfdom. We cannot gather whether their standard of housing was already lower than that of other workers or whether the nature of the work and the habits of

(1) N.S.A. 1: 571.

the miners were to blame for squalid conditions. Nor in these Accounts, which are representative, is there any light thrown upon the practice of employing children underground. To this we shall return in due course, for here there was no improvement until 1842.

In contrast to the coal mines, though the two were so closely bound up with each other, the iron industry in Falkirk and Larbert presents a happy picture. The impression of prosperity is so great that none of the untoward conditions observed in mining parishes find any place in the record. The developed life of the area was in fact the product of brilliant industrial pioneering. "The number of people employed in this great work, and the constant demand for every product of the soil, from an oak-tree to a cabbage plant, renders an account of the parish of Larbert and the Carron Iron works almost identical."⁽¹⁾

If it took the personality of Robert Owen to make a reputation for New Lanark, the Carron Iron Works were famous in their own right - "the parent of the basic industries of the Forth and Clyde valleys."⁽²⁾ Though by the eighteen thirties there were more extensive works in the neighbourhood

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 373.

(2) Hamilton: op.cit.155.

of Glasgow, the long establishment of the Carron Works from 1760 makes possible a more accurate assessment of their social impact. "The Carron Iron-Works were, for many years, the largest in Scotland; but recently some of the blast-furnace establishments near Glasgow have been increased, so as to surpass the number of blast-furnaces at Carron."⁽¹⁾ The vast development of coal and iron in Lanarkshire was only commencing; the manufacture of steel was in its infancy; the population of Motherwell was only 1100 in 1831.

What appealed to the clergy of Larbert and Falkirk was the great increase in wealth, the improved diet and general living conditions of the working people. "The Carron Iron Works have in a peculiar manner tended to improve this town and neighbourhood."⁽²⁾ First, there is the number of men employed, reckoned at 2000, and finding more lucrative employment than could be found in agriculture. Second, there is the coming into general use of "wheat bread" in place of "the oat cakes barley scones and potatoes"⁽³⁾ of the rural worker and the introduction of butcher meat as a normal item of diet. Third, the housing conditions both rural and

(1) N.S.A.VIII: 374.

(2) O.S.A. XIX: 93.

(3) N.S.A. VIII: 365.

industrial were being greatly improved. "The houses of the country people, which are now building from time to time to replace the old and decayed dwellings, are more roomy and more convenient, - better built and better roofed, - the walls and doors higher, and the windows larger than they were in the old houses."⁽¹⁾ In the writer's view the revolution both in agriculture and industry has brought large gain to the common man: "In the parish of Larbert the working class enjoys the means of comfort, to as great an extent as in any part of Great Britain. The people are well lodged, fuel is cheap, the schools are admirably conducted, and the markets are reasonable as to price, and very abundantly supplied." As at Tranent the worst social evil is insobriety. "They have one bad habit, a propensity to drinking, and, like its sister fire, a good servant but a bad master; - many a clever fellow falls a victim to whisky".⁽²⁾

We noted the consumption of butcher meat as a criterion of the new prosperity in Blantyre. The details of this material betterment emanating from industry, as recorded in the Old Account of Falkirk, seem to guarantee its accuracy.

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 378.

(2) N.S.A. VIII: 378.

That exceptional and meagre use of protein in medieval and post-medieval Scotland, denoting its poverty, has disappeared.

"Forty years ago few of the common people were in the habit of eating butcher meat except a little with their greens in winter.

K / This scanty portion they salted about Martinmas, and consequently about that season of the year, more butcher meat than common was brought into the market. But now all descriptions of the people are more in the practice of eating annual food." (1)

Apparently, till the advent of industrial wages and of turnip cultivation, which enabled more stock to be wintered, the ordinary people had never enjoyed any regular supply of meat. The great trade in cattle, for which Falkirk was famous, had been mainly for export.

K / In the use of cereals, the new age of plenty is just as marked, for the hungry forties had not yet dawned and the impecunious peasantry of Burns' day were main criterion from which it was possible to estimate progress. Springing directly from the agricultural revolution, the white bread of modern times, came ^{first} into ~~more~~ general use with the better remunerated industrial population. "At the period above alluded to (1850) there were not more than 200 bolls of wheat

per annum reduced into flour for the use of the Falkirk bakers. It was ground in common mills and boulded by hand sieves. Now about 7000 bolls are made use of annually; it is ground in mills which are made for the purpose of preparing flour."⁽¹⁾ During that period of forty years the population has more than doubled but there is thirty five times as much white bread consumed. It is a development for which the clergy might well be grateful to the new works and to the men of enterprise who produced the change.

From these sketches of the changing standards of living in coal mining and iron founding parishes, we take a glance at the improved subsistence level elsewhere and we dwell at length upon the housing situation-where there was much improvement in building technique and much deterioration through overcrowding. Thereafter, we shall enlarge upon another of the debit sides of industrial progress - its poorer standards of health from which the iron works of Falkirk were not exempt.

Here is an impression of the higher standards of living that came to Scotland generally. "The condition of the people is much improved. The article of potatoes has

contributed materially to bring about this change, not only in affording nourishment to themselves, but in enabling them to acquire a considerable quantity of excellent bacon, which before could only be procured at mills, and at a high price. Tea has also become a new article of comfort and consumption, which the rise in the price of labour, since its introduction into this country has enabled them to procure. The superior clothing, too, since the introduction of steam, forms another striking proof of the comfort of the peasantry."⁽¹⁾ To connect the welfare of the peasant with the introduction of steam indicates the wide diffusion of the benefits of the great inventions. No doubt in the exploitation of them a small minority profited most, but, in the process too, the great majority reached new levels of prosperity. Potatoes, tea bacon butcher meat, white bread - all these came for the first time within reach of ordinary people. Could any have resisted the spirit of enterprise that brought them?

Two considerations help to explain why many of the Accounts ignore housing altogether. For one thing, houses were all much on the same level as regards sanitation and the advantages of the wealthy were to a large extent advantages

(1) N.S.A. IX: Cameron 314.

of space. For another, it is certain that this was no age of jerry building. There is no mention of the brick houses which, in later days, the coal-owners so hurriedly erected; it is questionable whether the "single-end," constructed as such, was much in vogue. The artisans houses built at this time were substantial stone buildings; many of them are inhabited to this day and - with the addition of sanitation - deemed adequate. Here, indeed, we encounter one of the paradoxes of Scottish housing that its very solidity created problems. How often have the solid and imposing walls of one generation, survived to become the slums of a fourth or fifth generation or of one still further removed. The fate of the "Royal Miles" in Stirling and Edinburgh is that of much of Scotland's housing writ large.

Noteworthy at this time was the swift advance from thatch to slated roofs. Thus at Dundonald, "what were little better than mud walls have given place to substantial stone and lime, and in many places to elegant architecture. The comfortable but unstable thatch has been supplanted by slate."⁽¹⁾ So also at Paisley: "its appearance has been greatly improved by several low thatched houses having given way to

(1) N.S.A. V: 688.

neat and substantial tenements. Improvements of this description are in rapid progress."⁽¹⁾ Fife shows the same transition:

"The improvement that has taken place in the building of houses is very decided. The walls are built of neat squared whin, and rybats, corners, skews, and chimney-tops of ashlar work of freestone, the roof either tile or slate, the interior of four apartments very comfortably and substantially finished."⁽²⁾

This was in Leslie; in Abbotshall parish, "the streets and lanes of Linktown are narrow and the original houses are mostly low and uncomfortable. Many of the houses, however, have been rebuilt, and many new ones erected; all of them in point of convenience and accommodation, far exceeding the old ones."⁽³⁾ Finally, in Stirling we have the only reference to brick houses that we have been able to trace: "In a very few cases, brick, made in the place is employed"⁽⁴⁾

What must have been the equivalent of miner's rows are favourably described at Carluke:" The different lines of houses lately erected by the Shotts Iron Company for the

(1) N.S.A. VII: 200

(2) N.S.A. IX: 123

(3) N.S.A. IX: 159.

(4) N.S.A. VIII: 427.

accommodation of their work-people and which have been prudently placed at a considerable difference from each other ... constitute another populous village. They have already erected 94 excellent dwellings."(1)

The new Town of Edinburgh, by far the most notable and spectacular piece of town-planning in Scotland, dates from 1767 and was by no means the only instance of large scale planning: "The architectural operations and improvements in Edinburgh during the last half century rival, both in extent and beauty, those of any other city in the kingdom; and reflect no less credit on the public enterprise of the inhabitants, than on the taste and science of the architects employed."(2) Unfortunately there was not the same self-consciousness in the expansion of other cities and industrial towns, though there is evidence that some of the new towns created by industry were laid out according to designs not unrelated to the well-being of the inhabitants. This was so with Grangemouth." The town was commenced in 1777 by Sir Laurence Dundas, in the prospect that its connection with the canal would raise it into consequence as a sea-port. The

(1) N.S.A. VI: 592.

(2) N.S.A. I: 646.

The streets are regular, having been built upon a plan, and the appearance of the place, from the flatness of the surrounding country, the canal, and the frequent sea-dykes, suggests the idea of a Dutch village."⁽¹⁾

Care had also been bestowed on the planning of Johnstone⁽²⁾ and of Laurieston: "This place has been laid out on a regular plan on the sides of the highway, having a square in the centre, with lanes in the same direction on the south and north, and intersected by cross streets."⁽³⁾ These were really new towns; from the absence of any mention of large scale plans in most places we gather that civic pride and the powers vested in civic authorities were insufficient to prevent the haphazard development of the average industrial town. It is a far cry from the new Town of Edinburgh to the unimaginative expansion of Glasgow or Coatbridge. But these were mainly products of the second half of the 19th Century and beyond the purview of the Accounts.

The general impression of the Clergy was that the housing situation like that of food and clothing was on the

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 24.

(2) N.S.A. VII: 201.

(3) N.S.A. VII: 23.

mend: "There are striking changes both in the personal appearance of the people and in places within the last thirty years. Much better houses are being built, both in town and country." (1)

Standards certainly improved for most people but for a great many they also declined. We leave the gains and advantages of which the ministers were so convinced to look at the new poverty that came to exist alongside wealth. For example, at Renfrew, "barns and other offices, formerly appended to the dwellings of substantial burgesses, became loom shops. Instead of a "butt and a benn" a single apartment was now all that could be afforded as a dwelling house." (2)

The increase of population in the early industrial era greatly exceeded the increase of accommodation. It gave rise to that housing shortage which has not even now been overtaken. The period under review is one when overcrowding (which is almost synonymous with slumdom) became an acute problem in every industrial area. Dr. Sutherland of the General Board of Health stated in 1848, "I have been credibly informed that for years a population of many thousands has been annually added

(1) N.S.A. XI: 84.

(2) N.S.A. VII: 20.

to Glasgow by immigration without a single house being built to receive them." (1) The Glasgow Accounts are uncommunicative on this terrible problem. In fact, the Old Account argues that the American War greatly reduced the gap between rich and poor." Riches in Glasgow were formerly the portion of a few merchants. These from the influence of the manufactures are now diffusing themselves widely among a great number of manufacturers, mechanics and artisans. This has made an alteration in the houses, dress, furniture, education and amusements of the people of Glasgow within a few years, which is astonishing to the older inhabitants; and has been followed by a proportional alteration in the manners, customs and style of living of the inhabitants, and as many of the merchants have of late been engaging in manufactures and trade, the distance in point of rank and consequence between merchants and tradesmen, has now become less conspicuous than it was before the American War" (2).

The full employment obtaining in Glasgow in 1793 may have contributed to this agreeable impression of social

(1) Ferguson: op.cit. 58

(2) O.S.A. V: 534.

progress: "notwithstanding the great increase of the inhabitants and the many late inventions for abridging labour, there is still a difficulty to procure a sufficient number of hands to perform the work of the different undertakings, which the people here have stock and spirit to carry on."⁽¹⁾

The existence, however, of a "submerged tenth" and of a growing proletariat can be read between the lines, when the moral situation is being described. It appears⁽²⁾ with a certain naivete amongst a catalogue of crimes which were on the increase and which were almost certainly connected with the population having outgrown the housing resources of the city: "The strict severity and apparent sanctity of manners, formerly remarkable ~~here~~, have yielded to the opposite extreme. There is now a great deal more industry on six days of the week and a great deal more dissipation and licentiousness on the seventh. Great crimes were formerly very uncommon, but now robberies, house breaking, swindling, pick pockets, pilferers, and consequently executions are become more common. These delinquents, as well as common prostitutes, are often little advanced above childhood; and

(1) IBID.

(2) It appears ^{also} in the Account of Cathcart "Glasgow, where disease is ever revelling"
N.S.A. VII: 496.

yet a healthy child of 7 or 8 years or at most of 10 years of age, can now earn a very decent subsistence from some of the numerous manufactures established among us." (1)

For such conditions to exist, the wider diffusion of wealth amongst craftsmen and artisans-previously claimed-must have been accompanied by a greater concentration of poor in lanes and closes. The Accounts bring us no nearer to the Glasgow Slums than this record of crime. "It is my firm belief", wrote a Government Commissioner in 1838, "that penury, dirt, misery, drunkenness, disease and crime culminate in Glasgow to a pitch unparalleled in Great Britain." (2)

When child labour is regarded as a happy alternative to child prostitution we get the impression that Glasgow's social problem was already enormous at the beginning of the century. In the clerical view Glasgow is flourishing but not in every direction, for crime and misery are flourishing within its bounds. But this social maladjustment is accepted as almost inseparable from an advancing civilisation in much the same way as death on the roads is accepted at the present time.

(1) O.S.A. V: 536.

(2) Ferguson op.cit. 58.

Notice of overcrowding is more explicit in Edinburgh Dundee and Greenock. In Edinburgh we have the curious affirmation that the building of new houses in the years preceding 1827 so far exceeded the demand that the city extension was stopped for several years.⁽¹⁾ And this appears, unconnected in the writer's mind, with the congestion, which he records, in the heart of the city. "In the old town, the leading Streets, which are sufficiently spacious, contain numerous narrow lanes or closes, where the higher houses on each side tend to confine the air⁽²⁾ and impede thorough cleanliness; yet even here ventilation is good from the elevation of the ridge on which the principal part of the old town is built.... The modern police regulations are so complete as respects cleanliness, that the ancient reproach of the filthiness of the Scottish capital is now (1845) entirely removed. As respects the domestic cleanliness and comforts of the lower classes in the old town, however, much is still wanting - a mere ample supply of water and public conveniences. In this locality too the houses are by far too crowded and too high, by which system many of the comforts of

(1) N.S.A.: 1. 646

(2) c.p. Dumbarton: "The houses are generally closely built together, and many of them very ill-aired" N.S.A. VIII: 11.

dwellings for the poor are precluded. Some idea of the crowded state of the poorer classes may be formed from the fact, that many of the large tenements of the old town contain from 100 to 150 inmates, a whole family being crowded into an apartment not more than twelve or fourteen feet square".⁽¹⁾

This is a far clearer picture than any that we have of the much more extensive slums of Glasgow. The reproach of filthiness has gone from the Streets of Edinburgh but the reproach of overcrowding and squalor remains in the tenements. The writer believes that an increased ^{water} ~~water~~ supply and an extension of those measures of public health which had cleared the Streets, will bring improvement. We can scarcely expect him to anticipate the rehousing of the slum population by the public authorities, for this does not appear to have been undertaken on a very ~~large~~ scale before the nineteen twenties. But when he enumerates the cessation of economic building, coexisting with a real housing shortage, he unconsciously poses the problem that can only be solved by the uneconomic rent.

In addition to their many discomforts the poor and inadequately housed, are also more liable to epidemic disease: "From the great destitution of the numerous poor in Edinburgh,

(1) N.S.A. 1. 743.

and from the intemperate and irregular habits of many of those who are employed in labour of various kinds, - from the crowded state of their houses already mentioned, and from want of habits of cleanliness, fevers and other diseases are at all times every prevalent. The general health of the middle and higher classes on the other hand, may be reckoned as fully equal to that of the average of towns in Britain, and perhaps above that of equal or superior size, especially the large and crowded manufacturing towns."⁽¹⁾

Lord Cockburn remarked in 1849 that "mercifully Edinburgh had almost no manufactures"⁽²⁾ but Dundee owed its rapid growth to its mills. It has its full share of overcrowding and ill-health: "But, either on account of the exhalations arising from the silt of which a great extent is uncovered every day by the recess of the tide, or from the original swampiness of the bottom on which a considerable part of the town stands, or from the impurity of the atmosphere arising from the smoke of steam-engines used in the manufactories, or from the denseness of the population in many districts, or from the negligent habits of the people

(1) N.S.A. I. 736

(2) Ferguson. Op.Cit.14.

as to cleanliness, or from a combination of several, or all these causes, the town must be regarded as still rather unhealthy."(1)

A typical case of unregulated growth and unsanitary conditions can be found in Greenock-where more planning was expended on docks and factories than on streets and housing. "The town of Greenock though it certainly occupies too a small a space for the number of its inhabitants, though one of its two principal streets, and a number of the lanes between them are very narrow and though, from its vicinity to the mountains, it is subject to frequent rains, is not in the opinion of the medical gentlemen in it unhealthy... It must surprise a stranger, however, to observe that in a sea-port where, at a medium, the tide flows 9 or 10 feet perpendicular, meeting several rivulets, the slaughter house should send, chiefly by means of pumped water, its blood and filth through the greatest breadth of the town. This shocking nuisance, the magistrates and principal people of Greenock have repeatedly attempted to remove; but all these endeavours have hitherto been thwarted."(2)

(1) N.S.A. XI: 2.

(2) O.S.A. V.: 581.

Here is public spirited comment on a situation produced by too rapid development. If laissez faire has brought new wealth and a vast increase of population it has also its "nuisances" requiring a greater measure of public control.

More specific to the Industrial Revolution than even housing, is the effect of factory work on the health of the people. Ill-health, long working hours, child-labour and poverty compose much of the indictment that can be brought by the modern sociologist against the ruling powers and the mental climate of this generation. For the present we confine our attention to the lowering physique and the rising death rate. This enormous price that was being paid for progress, the clergy show no disposition to ignore.

G.D.H. Cole argues that the Industrial Revolution appeared as a force outside of man's control - in contrast to the French Revolution which was a product of human wills. "They were possessed by a secure faith in its ultimate rightness, and besides this the sufferings, the unrest and the destruction that accompanied it seemed to them matters of little account." (1)

(1) Cole op.cit. 4.

If this is correct it confirms Carlyle's view that the concern and humility of the clergy in face of vexatious conditions was exceptional for the times. The declining health, the injurious effects of indoor employment, sedentary labour and bad ventilation are sufficiently marked to warrant the assumption that they lay upon the conscience of the Church.

Thus in Barrhead the death rate amongst workers in the cotton factories is recorded as high. ⁽¹⁾ And Paisley because of its indoor employments has a higher death rate than Greenock even when the risks of sea-faring have been taken into account. ⁽²⁾ The type of work and the type of factory which brought premature death to the workers are not exactly described but they can well be imagined from a note upon flax-spinning in Arbroath." A degree of huskiness in the voice may be viewed as characteristic of the females employed at the Spining Mills." ⁽³⁾ On the other hand, the mills of new Lanark, for which credit is variously ascribed to David Dale and Robert Owen, are given a clean bill of health by the minister of Lanark. "In the village of New Lanark, where the inhabitants are exclusively employed in the manufacture of cotton yarn, and exposed many

(1) N.S.A. VII: 315. (~~Below~~)

(2) N.S.A. VII: 429.

(3) N.S.A. XI: 84.

hours at a time to the inhalation of an atmosphere loaded with cotton flocculi and dust, numerous cases of pulmonary disease might be expected. Yet on consulting the medical records of that extensive establishment, such cases are found to be much rarer in proportion to the number of the inhabitants than in the neighbouring town".⁽¹⁾ Elsewhere, the Rev. William Menzies betrays strong prejudice against Robert Owen. In New Lanark, he says, "he excogitated and made an abortive attempt to reduce to practice his wild theories for the renovation of Society."⁽²⁾ Perhaps in these health statistics he pays him an unconscious tribute.

A feeling that some industries were detrimental to the physical well being of the workers reveals itself in the frequent use of the phrase that the health of operatives is no worse than in similar establishments, throughout the country. When this phrase occurs in the contributions of works-managers, a doubt might be hazarded if the full gravity of the case is being stated. Presumably, it is to works managers that we owe the report on the Falkirk Iron Works and the Camelon nail factory. "No branch of these employments

(1) N.S.A. VI: 3.

(2) N.S.A. VI: 12.

is considered more detrimental to health than other trades, and no disease is peculiar to them. The most common complaints are, fever, a disease called blackspit, and other epidemical disorders; but to those they are subject only in common with other workmen in the neighbourhood. Many of them attain to an advanced period of life."⁽¹⁾ The conditions in the nail works are considered far more favourable than those in Cotton. "The employment is by no means unhealthy, and the workmen are less subject to disease than those employed in cotton or similar factories."⁽²⁾

How did this cotton manufacture earn such an evil reputation? The minister of Lochwinnoch offers a fair explanation. There was seldom much precaution as to the buildings used and little of that self-conscious effort to safeguard health, so helpfully applied in New Lanark. "The confinement and high temperature of the mills must enfeeble the frame, and ultimately tell on the health of the workers, especially when they do not enter them in early life; but they are not immediately broken down, and are not in general very sickly, so long as they continue to work, though paler and

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 18.

(2) IBID.

sometimes thinner than those who are employed in the open air".⁽¹⁾

It was a problem of ventilation, of the long hours spent in a confined atmosphere with too many workers for the size of the buildings. At Renfrew the minister notices the beneficial effects of seasonal employment in the fields. "Their employment, however, is not constant, and they have to work in apartments too much heated to be very healthy. It may be proper here to mention a very laudable and advantageous practice common among females, usually employed in manufactures during the greater part of the year: in summer and autumn a considerable number lay aside their needles and other implements of manufactures and hire themselves to the farmers in the neighbourhood at potato planting, hay making, hoeing and weeding, and latterly, at reaping, digging potatoes and raising turnips. This change of employment is beneficial to health, profitable to the labourers; and ought farther to be encouraged as productive of intercourse and kindly feeling between different classes of the community."⁽¹⁾ Here are solitudes worthy of mention; the health of the people, and their increased ^{neighbourliness,} ~~sense of community~~. These had both been threatened and, indeed, sometimes destroyed, by industrial

(1) N.S.A. VII: 104.

(2) N.S.A. VII: 24.

progress. It is easy now to see that this was happening but it is great depth of insight to have seen it at the time.

The general health of Paisley, the great centre of the cotton industry, bears witness to the ill-effects which made cotton a by-word: "The confinement and sedentary life of the operative manufacturers, may perhaps account, in part, for these consumptive ailments which are of frequent occurrence."⁽¹⁾ Modern studies in the trends of population have shown that the phenomenon of great longevity in certain individuals in any particular society is not directly related to the average expectation of life. The latter has curved very decidedly upwards with the application of new regulations for public health to industrial populations. But while the average expectation of life has vastly increased, instances of very great longevity have not become more numerous in any thing like the same proportion. The minister of Paisley is therefore mistaken if he adduces cases of extreme old age as a counterprise to the high death rate in his parish. Both can exist side by side. Not everyone is adversely employed and some constitutions resist and survive most adverse conditions. It may be, however, that he is only recording longevity and

(1) N.S.A. VII: 145.

high mortality side by side without implying in the existence of the former any mitigation of the circumstances that produced the latter.

"We may add that in proportion to its population Paisley can show as many instances of longevity as most places throughout Scotland. No doubt our people who are employed in mining and mechanical operations are liable to many accidents, which tend to shorten human life, and in some of our manufactories the employment is by no means of the most healthful description."⁽¹⁾ Had the statistics been available, the minister of Dumfries could ~~no doubt~~ have shown a far higher expectation of life in his parish from the very absence of those mills which wrought such havoc in Paisley. "If the extent, population and manufactures of Dumfries be not very considerable, it is exempted in great measure, from those evils of which in large cities, a high degree of luxury, sedentary labour, and confinement in an wholesome air are productive."⁽²⁾

Though such developments as Insurance against industrial injury had been foreshadowed by the Friendly

(1) N.S.A. VII: 251.

(2) O.S.A. V.: 137.

Societies, the minister of Dundee anticipated, by more than half a century, their universal adoption in this country. There is ^{as} yet no impulse for the wider spreading of the wealth produced by the machine, but there is at least a plea for spreading its burdens. When a man is disabled in the ordinary discharge of his work, it should be a matter of corporate concern. The following scheme with its employers' and workers' contributions is in every way modern save for the backing and compulsion of the State:

"One other remark connected with the subject (working conditions in factories) suggests itself here. It is well known that not a year passes by without accidents occurring to both old and young persons employed about machinery; and these accidents are often so severe, as not only to lay aside those who receive them from working for a long time, but even to maim them forever after, and thereby to disqualify them from earning their livelihood. Might not a method be devised to meet such emergencies as those? If a weekly contribution from each of the operatives, at the rate of one penny for every crown earned, and an annual assessment on the masters proportioned either to the steam power, or to the number of hands employed by them, were thrown into one fund, and well

managed, it would not only meet these cases as they occur, but in a little time would form such a fund as would render weekly payments unnecessary."(1)

The Parish of Campsie - increased in population from little over 1000 in 1780 to 6000 in 1840, including 1000 Irish - with industry ranging from coal mining to calico printing, dye stuffs and chemicals-provides a compendium of the ills of the working population. "1. The cottages are almost, without exception, damp, being generally ill built, and generally without drainage. 2. Though in this respect there is a considerable improvement, still the people generally are too little impressed with the importance of cleanliness in their habitations, and of ventilation, as means of preserving health. 3. In the villages, especially in Lennoxtown, where the inhabitants have increased in a far greater proportion than the houses, the people are much too crowded in their dwellings. The Irish labourers have imported their custom of pigging, - as many persons occupying a room at night as can find space to lie in it, - a practice equally inimical to health and to decency. 4. Though none of the manufactures in this place appear decidedly injurious to

health, as compared with many others, yet there are many circumstances necessarily involved in manufacturing employments, which cannot but prove, on the whole, unfavourable to health; such as the practice of putting children to work at an early age; labour in heated rooms; attending furnaces; working among cold water; breathing a hot atmosphere in which a great quantity of water vapour and other gases are suspended; mining, etc. Though the masters of works in this parish manifest, almost universally, a very humane regard to the health and comfort of their work-people, these causes must on the whole, operate unfavourably on their health and longevity."⁽¹⁾

Economic and Social changes have, as D.G.H. Cole suggests, the effect of an impersonal force. Whether all the evils here enumerated were inherent in the situation, many have taken leave to doubt.- "technology is no fate but a product of men's designs and values."⁽²⁾ It was, however, the answer to another social situation with a small population living on slender means and often threatened by famine. We may blame the clergy for taking over the economic determinism

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 236.

(2) Brunner. op.cit. 9.

of Adam Smith but we cannot dispute their sympathetic recording of much that men of position would readily forget. Their plea is not easily answered: "Things were worse before; they are worse where industry does not exist."

So the minister of Campsie, setting weal against woe, balances the account:- "On the other hand, it is proper to remember, that persons employed in manufactures are generally not exposed to cold and wet, the great springs of disease among the agricultural population. 2. The inhabitants of Campsie are, for the most part, better employed and better paid than in most surrounding (i.e. agricultural) parishes. 3. The parochial allowances, though probably not so large as the sanitary and moral welfare of the population demand, are liberal, compared with those of many other parishes. 4. A large number of landed proprietors and manufacturing gentlemen are resident in the parish, most of whom are wealthy and liberal; so that it is almost impossible that much of that slow starvation should be found here, which is complained of in many other parts of the country." (1)

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 237.

CHAPTER FIVE

WAGES

"It may with safety be anticipated, that, if matters go on as they are doing at present, the next Statistical Account, given at a similar interval, will present contrasts still more striking and satisfactory than those between this and the last." N.S.A.V. (Dalserf) 765.

Summary. Distribution of wealth in medieval and early industrial eras: Feudalism dies hard in Scotland: disappearance of medieval controls. Justices of the Peace: thirlages: wages higher in industry but more unstable: depression and unemployment the worst problems: failure of companies: Glasgow's economy more broadly based after the loss of tobacco trade: depressions in Paisley: general advance in wages in forty years: low wages in cotton weaving: high wages in shipbuilding, sugar refining and mines: the five day week in Bannockburn: low wages in Linlithgow: poverty of weavers in Arbroath and Renfrew: Irish flood labour market in Dundee: high wages of specialised trades: profits obscure: cost of living low, bread and coal: schoolmasters paid at the rate of day-labourers: substantial position of the clergy.

whether the distribution of wealth under the early capitalism/

capitalism associated with industry was more unequal and more inhumanly used than that of the feudal economy which was being displaced will never be exactly determined. The attempts to do so have been attempts to weigh the imponderable. The prestige arising from land tenure and seigniorial rights is not easily measured against the power that came to the industrial magnate by his ownership of machines and his ability to employ or dispense with great numbers of workers. Toynbee⁽¹⁾ gives good grounds for thinking that wealth became more unequal: the conditional use of land inherent in feudalism gave way to the absolute, with its abolition of common lands and customary rights; the discovery of mineral wealth came as an enormous unearned increment to the landowner. There is a distinction, however, between serfdom and free labour not to be computed in terms of money, and rendering every attempted appraisal open to doubt.

In Scotland there was little corresponding to that centralisation of power under the Tudors which is thought to mark the end of Feudalism in England. We have seen that the status of miners remained feudal till 1775. Blackmail was paid in Campsie to MacGregor of Glengyle as late as 1744⁽²⁾. The abolition/

(1) Toynbee Op. Cit. 71

(2) N.S.A. Vlll. 245

abolition of the heritable jurisdictions only followed the Rebellion of 1745⁽¹⁾ and thirlage of towns and farms to certain corn-mills remained till the end of the century and even beyond.

The clergy deemed all these to be the marks of a less enlightened age, signifying as great a bondage as many are now inclined to see in the new developments which they approved. They hailed that broad movement of society from status to contract, normally accepted as progressive. They did not see that there is a very limited freedom of contract between men of very unequal means, nor did they reach out toward that system of modified contract by which contemporary society has sought to safeguard economic freedom. Though the powers of the Justices of the Peace in fixing wages are not specifically mentioned it may be taken for granted (from what follows later) that they considered them impossible to enforce. These traditional powers had been reasserted in 1803 and 1812⁽²⁾, but they had immediately fallen into abeyance for there had been no compulsion upon employers to carry out their decisions. If there is more than a hint⁽³⁾ that some ministers felt the need for government intervention they are dubious whether wages and prices could in fact be fixed by authority. And some, frankly, pour/

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 414

(2) Mathieson. Op.Cit. 139.

(3) Page 255 and 209

pour scorn upon the idea⁽¹⁾. Was it not one of the falacies exposed by Adam Smith? Were such controls not fetters upon trade and a legacy from less prosperous times? In the novels of Sir Walter Scott, the medieval and Gothic was acquiring a new charm for the imagination, but some of its relics in the parishes were looked upon as nothing but obstacles in the path of progress:

"There are three other corn-mills in the parish. To these mills the town and some estates in the county are thirled; a wretched piece of police! Thirlage to a mill, and all kinds of feudal servitude to the landlord, are extremely inconvenient to the farmer, and hostile to all improvements. Indeed these Gothic customs are justly falling into disuse among the sensible part of the gentlemen of Scotland."⁽²⁾

The position so described by this minister of Dunbar in the Old Account had almost disappeared in the years that intervened between the Old Account and the New. Yet an echo of it can still be heard in Paisley in 1837: "The ancient servitudes once so oppressive and harassing to the agriculturalist, are now in a manner unknown in this parish; at least the only one of them which remains is that of thirlage, enacted by the Seed-hill Mill/

(1) Page 242

(2) O.S.A. V. 476.

Mill, from certain lands thirled to it. The thirlage thus exacted, including all the dues, is about the sixteenth or seventeenth peck."⁽¹⁾

The key position occupied by wages in a contractual society, receives much attention from the clergy. Two impressions, generally supported by the tables of wages in the accounts, are the relative height of industrial wages and the appearance of almost standard wages throughout the industrial belt of Scotland. While these conditions were rightly judged an advance upon subsistence farming and feudal servitude, a third factor may be even more significant. They were liable to an uncertainty and fluctuation noticed by some clergy but, insufficiently noticed, as we shall endeavour to show in dealing with poor relief. The higher standard of living was more insecure; it was often broken by depressed wages and unemployment; there were recurrent periods of acute distress.

A newly established factory, drawing to itself a population from every direction by its offer of a higher wage, became a terrible liability when its operations ceased or became intermittent through lack of trade. Not only did factories quickly rise and decline, they brought a permanent depression to many/

(1) N.S.A. VII. 260.

many home industries and weavers throughout the first half of the 19th Century were often near the lowest ebb of their fortune. The question of wages, therefore, presents the strange phenomenon of a general increase of wealth with much aggravation of poverty.

In becoming the workshop of the world, Great Britain attained a standard of living that had never been reached before. To gain this many of her people suffered all the tribulations of pioneers; for vast numbers it was a new and hard road with many falling by the wayside. "In Western Europe, where the industrial revolution had originated, its effects had become apparent only gradually, as part of a long continued process of historical evolution. By contrast, it was the late starters in the field of industrialisation, such as the Japanese and the Russians, who best realised the opportunities which the new techniques afforded for the planned transformation of whole economies on a national scale."⁽¹⁾ A great many judgments on the social dislocation of this era have, therefore, the weakness of being wise after the event. The prospect of new work did not hold in itself the new poverty which would come from the depression with its unemployed. It is to the credit of certain ministers that they saw that the better wages of industry were also more uncertain; industry might come and go, agriculture went on.

Thus/

(1) C.A. Fisher. The Listener 26/7/51. 127

Thus, though his parishioners are receiving the modest wages of agriculture, the minister of Auchtertool realises that it is a far more regular and permanent way of earning a living: "The only apparent probable cause of the increase of population, is the progress of agricultural improvement. By that and the increased attention to the improvement of roads, a much greater number of labourers is necessary than in former times, whose labour is remunerated by ample wages; and though the price of their labour does occasionally rise and fall somewhat, yet it is much more steady and uniform than that of the labour of operatives in manufactures." (1)

Later on he returns to the same theme. For with the agricultural revolution in full swing, land being improved and produce finding ready markets in the growing towns, he sees also a drift back to the country." It is obvious that, in this state of things, there is a tendency to induce the labouring classes of both sexes to resort to country villages and cottar houses for residence, where employment is always to be had. The rate of wages, compared with the price of grain, is always high, and less fluctuating than in trade and manufactures." (2)

Unemployment/

(1) N.S.A. IX. 253.

(2) N.S.A. IX. 253.

Unemployment through the bankruptcy of companies was specially noted amongst the causes of hardship in Paisley and Arbroath. Normal commercial risks, so much greater in industry at its experimental stage and a constant threat to the security of work and wages, became calamitous in the hands of unscrupulous speculators. The minister of Kirkcaldy rejoices that the^{se} have not flourished in his parish; industry is steady and the workers have not suffered from fraudulent management: "A spirit of enterprise, directed and regulated by that prudent caution which naturally accompanies the possession and employment of real capital in business, pervades this manufacturing and commercial community, and prevents the town being visited with these sudden and ruinous convulsions which the rashness of mere speculators, whom injurious facilities for obtaining credit raise up and sustain for a time, too frequently brings upon other trading districts. The habits and conduct of the merchants and manufacturers, who are commonly capitalists to a greater extent than is general throughout the country, in the management of their business, and the nature of the trade itself, give a steadiness to the various branches of industry, and exercise a very salutary influence on the community generally."⁽¹⁾ Steadiness of trade was by no means the rule.

In/

⁽¹⁾N.S.A. IX. 751.

In Cathcart we have that melancholy reminder of the vulnerableness of the more developed society - a mill standing idle. The closed factory and the machinery, which had scarcely been used, were already present to remind people of those risks attending human ambition of which the Tower of Babel is so apt a symbol: "At Netherlee, on the Cart, there is a very extensive printfield, capable of giving employment to 300 persons, including children, to which very large additions were built about two years ago; but from the stagnation of trade, the work is at present discontinued, and the property is now in the market."⁽¹⁾ No blame is attached to the owners and managers of this enterprise for the disappointment and hardships it must have brought to its numerous employees. It has given work for a time and has yielded, as it were, to an impersonal force - the stagnation of trade. Nor is any aggravation of poverty through the unemployment of 300 in a parish of 2000, perceptible in this Account. Probably, from the proximity of Glasgow, most of the workers had come from Glasgow and had drifted back to be re-absorbed ~~again~~ in Glasgow's social problem.

Some idea of the scope of temporary unemployment throughout the industrial counties may be gained from this catalogue of changes in Old Kilpatrick: "The smith and iron foundry/

(1) N.S.A. VII. 508.

foundry, which employed 273 hands, has wholly disappeared, and in place of one of its factories, there is one of Mr. Dunn's cotton-mills, - while of another of its branches at Old Kilpatrick village, there are no remains. The wool mill, which finished 1000 yards a day, is superseded by a mill for cotton."⁽¹⁾

That lofty detachment to slums and wretched living conditions - which makes the Accounts of Glasgow less profitable to the social historian than the Accounts of many smaller places - has its value in providing a conspicuously modern observation on Glasgow's lop-sided economy. Depressed areas have often arisen from undue dependence on one particular trade. Scotland, we are told, has suffered in poverty and unemployment because she relied too much on her heavy industries; And this insight has been acted upon in recent years. But one hundred and fifty years ago, the evils of an unbalanced economy were fully apparent to the "respectable persons" to whom the ministers of Glasgow entrusted the Old Account of the City. The American War, in destroying the tobacco trade (lucrative as it had been) was a blessing in disguise; it had forced the merchants to find a broader base for prosperity; it had opened up the prospect of a far more stable future where there could be no repetition of such a catastrophe. Glasgow has no longer "all her eggs in the one/

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 35.

one basket!"

"This loss in the foreign trade is amply compensated by the great increase in manufactures; the merchants having of late turned their attention more to improve the manufactures which had been begun among them, and to establish new ones, which promise to be a source of much more permanent wealth than the other. Hence an event which for a time diminished, and, it was feared would ruin the trade of Glasgow, has eventually produced to its inhabitants the most solid advantages. The capital and enterprise of its traders have, since that period pursued different directions of employment. The combined powers of foreign trade, coasting trade and manufactures, the last two of which have of late years made such prodigious strides, now operating on each other with redoubled energy, are plainly discernible in the rapid increase of inhabitants and of new buildings; and bid fare to secure its industrious and enterprising citizens a growing fund of wealth and prosperity."⁽¹⁾

Unemployment through fluctuations of trade was often at its worst in Paisley. The disused factory, the building adapted to a totally different form of production and the derelict coal mine can be seen in nearly every large industrial area showing that, quite apart from wasting assets, we are dealing with a form of activity more than usually transitory and evanescent/

(1) O.S.A. V. 500

evanescent. In times of depression it is not unusual for fewer machines to be working than standing idle; in the notable case of Jarrow they all stood idle for a period of years. Of this intermittency of wages which was a greater problem than their actual amount - thought the two were not unconnected - Paisley offers the best example in early 19th Century Scotland.

"Of all the new features of modern society none is so peculiar or so frightful as the hordes of strong poor, always liable to be thrown out of employment by stagnation of trade. There have been above ten thousand of them in Paisley for more than a year (1843); and a similar cloud darkens every considerable town in Scotland They have discovered that their number is their force." (1)

Thus Lord Cockburn describes the situation; but the two ministers of Paisley responsible for the Account are far less alarmist. True, conditions have worsened after the Account was written; Cockburn's statement almost predicts revolutionary outbursts yet they never materialised with any degree of violence. Writing some six years earlier the clergy are well aware of the gravity of the situation - trading prospects are completely uncertain - but they have seen both boom and depression and since at the moment they are enjoying the former they are sanguine as to the future:

"But/

(1) Cockburn Op. Cit. 388.

"But Paisley must stand or fall by its manufacturing industry; and it becomes a very serious question, what may be the prospects of Paisley in this respect? At the time of the last Statistical Report, Paisley had enjoyed a lengthened period of manufacturing prosperity, and it continued to do so for a good many years after. Perhaps the most prosperous days for Paisley were those from 1803 to 1810, when the Continent was the seat of war, and when the maritime and commercial preponderance of insular Great Britain was propitiously felt in all her marts of trade. A good workman could, at that period, realise by the labour of his hands from £1-5s. to £2-10s. a week! The consequence was an overstocking of the trade and a glutting of the markets. Some extensive failures occurred, and by 1812 a most serious check had been given to manufactures. From that time till 1830 we have had our seasons of prosperity and decline; we have waxed and we have waned; but never did our operatives regain their former position of gainful industry. Time and the succession of events work wonders, and for the last eight years Paisley may be said to have been in a prosperous condition."⁽¹⁾

The position of those who suffered want through this continually changing economy is sympathetically stated. "When trade is flourishing, the people on the whole enjoy, in a considerable/

(1) N.S.A. VII. 302.

considerable degree, domestic comfort: but there are so many vicissitudes in the trade of the place, and reverses are so frequent, that after one unfavourable period, numbers have scarcely risen above their difficulties, when they are again obliged to encounter fresh ones. The circumstances of these in the country part of the parish are, in general, not so fluctuating."⁽¹⁾

When we turn from unemployment and "slack time" - the great privations of the industrial worker - to the actual wages, the figure corresponding to the basic agricultural wage of the present time seems to have been 10/- per week⁽²⁾. When fully maintained by the employer, the wages of the unmarried ploughman range from £10 to £12 a year, and of women workers from £5 to £7⁽³⁾. The man's wage corresponds to the frequently recorded wage of 10/- per week for unskilled labour. In the parish of Auchterderran where day labourers is at the rate of 1/6, the artisan has 12/- or 14/- a week⁽⁴⁾. In the neighbouring town of Kirkcaldy, however, there are three works, "engaged chiefly in making steam-engines, and flax-spinning machines, in executing mill-wright work, and in founding iron and brass. In these works/

(1) N.S.A. VII. 252.

(2) Handley Op.Cit. 47.

(3) N.S.A. IX. 309

(4) N.S.A. IX. 167.

works, 200 men at an average wage of 15/- per week, are employed."⁽¹⁾ It appears that the industrial wage very often exceeded that of even the skilled artisan.

But this figure of 15/- shows industry at its best. On the edge of Kirkcaldy, in the parish of Abbotshall the weavers are scarcely receiving a living wage. "All the people employed at the different works receive a fair remuneration for their labour, and, if careful, live comfortably, and frequently rear large families. The wages of certain operatives, however, have of late years been much reduced. An ordinary weaver, for instance, on the best paid fabrics, will not receive above an average of 8/- per week for his own labour."⁽²⁾ The very tone of this description conveys concern at hard economic conditions against which it appeared that very little could be done, for no remedy is suggested.

If the Napoleonic wars brought the spectacular wages of £1-5s. to £2-10s. to Paisley operatives, no such heights as these were reached again in the first half of the 19th Century. But the agricultural revolution making steady progress, ensured a great increase of welfare amongst farm workers: In the former Statistical Account, it is stated, "that men and women's wages had risen greatly of late; that men-servants used to get £6 Sterling/

(1) N.S.A. lx. 756.

(2) N.S.A. lx. 158.

Sterling for the year, and women £2-10s., but that then a man-servant received £8, and a woman £3 for the year." At the present date (1836) men-servants get £12, and women £6, and some £7 for the year. The rate of wages for the day-labourers has risen in proportion; and in comparison with former times, the comforts of the labouring class of the community are greatly increased."⁽¹⁾

The minister of Auchtertool goes on to argue that all classes have shared in this growing prosperity arising from a more efficient cultivation. "These benefits, however, are not unmerited; for though the price of labour be higher in proportion to the price of grain now than in former times, the labour is more profitable to the farmer. The servant labours harder; and his work being under more judicious and skilful direction, being more profitably applied, and better performed, is consequently more productive than formerly. The time was, when a considerable portion of time, in summer, was occupied by the farm-servants in pulling thistles out of the corn to supper their horses at night. So that, though the wages be advanced to a higher [^]ate, comparatively, the labour being more productive, is in fact not more costly. Accordingly, the farmer's comfort is very much enlarged, and his style of living very much altered and/

(1) N.S.A. IX. 263.

and improved. Landlord, tenant, and farm-servant have each their due proportion of the benefits derived from agricultural improvement."⁽¹⁾

This sketch of the wage structure which we have drawn from Fife could be drawn from any county in the Industrial belt. For example, in Dumbarton "agricultural labourers get the following rates of wages:- 1s.6d., 1s.8d., 2s.4d. Sterling per diem; the average rate is 10s. a week."⁽²⁾ By contrast Industrial wages reach even greater heights and depths than we have noted in Fife. In Milngavie the high remuneration of cotton spinning and its ill health are recorded side by side. "Good wages are made at most of these employments. Printers earn from 16s. to 30s., and cotton-spinners about 20s. a week. To common observation it would appear that cotton-spinning is not favourable to health, the workers having generally a sallow and delicate look."⁽³⁾

Cotton weaving as distinct from spinning exhibits the opposite extreme. There are very low wages in Cumberland. "The chief employment of the people is cotton weaving, there being about 560 weavers' looms in the parish, or nearly one-fifth of the whole population. Some time ago, weaver's work was/

(1) N.S.A. LX. 263.

(2) N.S.A. VIIII.10.

(3) N.S.A. VIIII.59.

was hardly to be obtained. At present, work is plentiful, but the prices are small: upon an average, the weaver's weekly earnings will not exceed 5s. or 6s. clear; and considering the price of provisions, and how few are of provident habits, many must be suffering privations."⁽¹⁾

The fixing of wages and of prices was, of course, anathema to current economic theory, not very practical in an export trade and scarcely to be expected from a Parliament but recently reformed. The Minister of Cumbernauld sees that the privations which are being suffered under laissez-faire are finding also a measure of cure through the same principle of supply and demand — the weavers are changing their occupation. "Indeed, the fluctuating nature of the cotton trade, and the small remuneration, have induced many of the weavers to relinquish the loom, and have recourse for employment to the coal and iron-stone mines."⁽²⁾

The heavy industry which was proving attractive to weavers does indeed exhibit the highest wage rates of workers in the eighteen thirties. The shipbuilders of Port Glasgow had more than double the agricultural wage. "At present this department of maritime industry gives employment to nearly 200 men, at the rate of about £1, or £1.1s. a-week, besides a number of/

(1) N.S.A. Vlll. 148.

(2) N.S.A. Vlll. 148.

of apprentices." In the rope works in the same town, men receive 15s. and in sugar refining wages range from 12s. to £1.10s. per week, So that the Minister is well justified in his conclusion: "The working classes are in general well employed and obtain good wages."⁽¹⁾

We have alluded to the high wages of miners in Tranent, but the figure there given of £2 per week coming into a house, affords no accurate standard for comparison with other wages. The figure for Renfrew, however, serves to confirm the relative superiority of the wages in industry even though, as here noticed, the miners' wages are hardly earned: "A collier's wages probably average from 15s. to 18s. per week, when he is regularly employed; but there are many interruptions and particular expenses to which he is incident; and the employment itself is neither agreeable nor healthy. Speaking of the colliers in this parish, it is proper to mention, that they are with a few exceptions, not inattentive to divine ordinances, and decent in moral conduct; and that one of them is a worthy and estimable member of the Kirk-Session."⁽²⁾

Even more favourably placed, economically, are miners of Paisley. The following table shows them with double the wages of the unskilled workers in the same Company's employment. "The wages of the above workmen are, miners from 3s./

(1) N.S.A. Vll. Port Glasgow 67.

(2) N.S.A. Vll. 25.

3s.4d. to 4s. per day, with houses, fires, and gardens, free of rent or other charge; labourers and others are paid from 1s.10d. to 2s3d. per day, and are not allowed houses and fires free."⁽¹⁾ These wages were made possible by the application of ~~machinery~~ ^{steam power} to the rich coal seams that were being discovered and to the vigorous exploitation of old ones on which primitive methods had made but little impression. At Newton near Dalkeith the Minister estimates the value of coal at ⁽²⁾ £4250 per acre. In Dunfermline the profits of the coal-owners, though not stated and impossible to assess, are regarded as exceedingly high. "The coal-mines became after 1771, and have continued to be, very lucrative to many of the proprietors,"⁽³⁾

Though based upon piece-work, the five day week for miners has already made its appearance in Plean and Bannockburn.

This appears to be almost an inevitable answer to the discomforts of the occupation. For it is realised that, "the miners, perhaps from their exposure to damp, are rather liable to rheumatism; but in general they are healthy, though it is seldom that either they or colliers attain to a very great age."⁽⁴⁾ But in this area, working for five days, they receive half as much again as the agriculturalist working for six:

"Our/

(1) N.S.A. VII.159.

(2) N.S.A. I. 574

(3) N.S.A. IX. 830.

(4) N.S.A. VIII. 331.

"Our coal mines are by far the most valuable in this parish, and these have been long and extensively wrought. Auchanbowie and Plean are wrought by the proprietors. Bannockburn and Greenyards are held in lease by the same Company. The people employed at these works are nearly 400. Of these there are usually 180 colliers, at 16s. per week, and in general they work only ten days in the fortnight. There are from 70 to 80 labourers at from 10s. to 12s. per week, excepting those who are placed in situations of trust and confidence, and to whom higher wages are allotted. There are upwards of 80 boys and girls, whose wages, according to their age and capacity, vary from 9d. to 2s. per day. The women are rather above 60 in number, and their wages from 1s. to 1s.6d. per day. The average wage stated above is what a good collier can make, as they are paid at a certain rate, according to the quantity of coals they produce. Nothing is charged for their coals, only they must hew them themselves. Houses and gardens also are in general provided for them, for which a very moderate rent is demanded."⁽¹⁾

From a study of the previous tables, it may be contended that the Industrial Revolution brought, as a rule, to its workers, better wages than even the rising agricultural wage. And the countryside itself would not have yielded those better/

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 331.

better standards without the stimulus given by growing towns to agricultural improvement. But when trade was depressed and in many home industries - by the competition of machines - there was a more acute stringency than a peasantry, with its access to land produce, is normally liable to suffer. What was the attitude of the clergy to wages that seemed impossibly low? They, at any rate, record them with sympathy. Sometimes they diagnose the causes, as if seeking a remedy. More often they accept them as brutal economic necessities about which very little could be done. They accept them with the resignation with which the 20th Century accepts the threat of war.

Here is a characteristic comment on low wages from the Minister of Linlithgow: "A number of women, principally unmarried, are engaged in sewing for Glasgow manufacturing houses. This employment can scarcely be termed remunerative, for the utmost that a female can earn working with the most untiring diligence from morning to night is about 6d. per day - a most miserable pittance, when we consider the toil of the overtasked female, who, however, but for this, scanty as it is, would be often entirely destitute."⁽¹⁾ When the unskilled labourer's wage was 10s. this figure of 3s.6d. did indeed spell poverty and relief, as we shall see, was not, as a rule, for the able-bodied.

No/

(1) N.S.A. 11. 181.

No amount of assiduity could relieve the economic predicament of the operatives in certain trades; where neither assiduity nor sobriety were much in evidence the poverty was terrible: "If the question be put, whether the people in general enjoy, in a reasonable degree the comforts and advantages of society, it may be stated, that most of the old men and women belonging to the class of operatives are very poor, in consequence of the difficulty of finding employment in that particular department of work, viz. winding yarn, and spinning at the wheel, by which they were enabled, some years ago to earn a living. Many also in the same class, who have not passed the vigour of mature age, are in very straitened circumstances, - especially weavers, whose wages are extremely low.

This is particularly the case where there is a family of young children who have not arrived at an age to do anything for themselves. In a great many, however, of these cases where extreme poverty is observable, the people are the main cause of their own wretchedness. The head of the family frequents the tippling-house, where he spends no inconsiderable portion of his earnings; and thus the wife and children are left in misery. In connection with this, and as accounting for much of the/

the prevailing poverty, it may be noticed, that comparatively few young men or women in the operative class, while they remain unmarried, ever think of saving any part of their wages: and that most of them enter into the married state without any previous provision for the probable expenses even of a humble family establishment. Nine tenths of the distress to be found in Arbroath may be traced to these sources. And if potatoes, with a sprinkling of salt, have in many instances been almost the only species of food attainable in families, it becomes a serious question, involving a high moral responsibility, how far absence from the tippling-house, combined with previous habits of economy, might have elevated such families above the necessity of subsisting on such scanty fare. The evil, however, exists already; and it is no easy matter to cure it, especially as a great majority of the sufferers seem to think, or at least wish it to be understood, that they are not themselves blameable. All their evils, they conceive, are to be ascribed to the government of the country; and they look, with a delusive hope, to a reformed Parliament as a cure for their every sorrow!"⁽¹⁾

This pungent criticism of the causes of poverty, attributing to improvidence and intemperance nine tenths of the miseries in Arbroath, is in contrast to the previous quotation from/

(1) N.S.A. Xl. 85.

from Linlithgow where no blame is attached to the poverty of the workers, where indigence accompanies great application and seems inherent in the economic process. Perhaps, in this figure of nine-tenths — with due allowance for rhetorical exaggeration — we have that misreading of the new situation from which arises the main charge against the Church, that it took too little account of impossible economic conditions. Hopes in a reformed Parliament though premature in the sense that they were not fulfilled in that generation were less delusive than the writer imagined. Moral causes of poverty are always profound but they had not that overwhelming preponderance over the purely economic to merit this judgment. For the writer goes on to say, in effect, that those who deserved no blame were also experiencing great adversity: "At the same time, it is not to be conceived that these apparently condemnatory remarks are universally applicable. Amongst the operative class of the society of Arbroath, we have found a numerous body of men and women whose habits are alike industrious and frugal, - who are exemplary in the discharge of the duties of morality and religion, — and have evinced a commendable patience in the endurance of that adversity that may have come to their lot/

lot."(1)

Lest it should be imagined that the cry of the impoverished was always answered, "you are yourselves nine-tenths to blame", we hasten to include a very different view of the same situation. The Minister of St. Vigean, whose parish covers part of Arbroath, has delegated his report on industry to a layman. But it may be presumed that it was to a friend and a churchman that he did so, and, as editor, he must have endorsed its somewhat radical sentiments. In this view there is a distinct realisation that the answer of the individual to depression of trade demands even more than sobriety and stewardship. If long continued it may involve a change of occupation or emigration, alternatives not easily contemplated or accomplished by any advanced in years. So grievous is the situation that writer says that no palliatives will be of any use. He refrains from propounding a cure but, when he says that "the axe must be laid to the root of the tree", he suggests a radical change in the whole structure of society and its underlying economic assumptions.

"In/

(1) N.S.A. XI. 87.

"In periods of bad trade, such as has been experienced during the last four or five years when wages are low, and bread high (1842) the remuneration is often inadequate to supply more than the necessaries of life; and the parents of many of the children being in such times either entirely idle, or only partially employed, it is obvious that no small amount of destitution and suffering must unavoidably ensue. Such, indeed, is unhappily the case, to some extent, at the present moment; and this brings us to speak of the hand loom weavers, and here there are none other, than whom we know of no class whose labour, even when full employment can be got, is so scantily remunerated".⁽¹⁾

This unemployment and destitution has been created by the failure of the home market for the particular products of Arbroath and the decision of the mill-owners to export their yarns. But this decision no more than saves the mills themselves from closing down: "But the mill-owner, it may be said, must at all events be profiting by this additional market for his yarns. The deterioration in value of this species of property of late years unhappily disproves/

disproves the inference. The principal advantage, in the meantime, arising out of the foreign demand seems to consist in the ability which it gives to the mill-owner of keeping his factory going, which he would otherwise have been totally unable to do, except at enormous sacrifice. Low prices can alone enable him to command the custom of the foreigner, who has heavy charges to pay before the article reaches its destination. To save these, he will doubtless ere long have factories of his own; and the time is probably not far distant when the spinning trade will fly our shores as the weaving already in a great measure has done. The cure for these alarming evils it would be alien to our purpose to propound; but this much we cannot avoid saying, that any attempt to administer palliatives to alleviate the condition of the present chief and most numerous victims of the revolution to which our staple manufactures are now being subjected, will, however philanthropic the intention, assuredly and in failure and disappointment. The axe must be laid to the root of the tree, or the poor weaver may hope in vain for any relief from his miseries".⁽¹⁾

(1) N.S.A. XI 508

Another penetrating analysis of the causes of low wages comes to us from the Minister of Renfrew. He sees that wages follow to a great extent the law of supply and demand and describes a vicious circle of poverty inducing weavers to start their children early in the work with a corresponding overstocking of the trade and further depression of wages. "The practice of employing children at drawing (yarn) is, on various accounts, objectionable. Parents are induced to send their children to this employment generally about seven or eight years of age, thus arresting their progress in education, when they have but well begun. They endeavour afterwards to pick up a little at evening classes, but their hours of labour are too extended to admit of this without oppression: their having been employed in this line from childhood, virtually shuts up the boys to the single occupation of weaving, in after life. They pass with ease and at little expense, from the employment of drawing to that of weaving. The trade is thus kept overstocked with hands, and wages continue, on this as well as other accounts, depressed, so that the very poverty of the weaver perpetuates some of the causes of his distress".⁽¹⁾

(1) N.S.A. VII 24

During this period the supply of labour was being continually augmented by immigration from Ireland. This is specially noted as a cause of low wages by the Minister of Dundee. "The following are the average wages at present paid at the mills, and generally in the linen manufacture in Dundee, viz. to flax-dressers from 10s.-12s. weekly; girls and boys, 3s.-6s.; women, 5s.-8s.; weavers, 7s.-10s.; millwrights, 14s.-18s. These wages, though much lower than they once were, owing to the altered state of the price of goods, as well as of the rate of wages in the country, yet, from the generally moderate rate of provisions in Dundee, the economy and prudence used in the families of the operatives, and their having regular employment, are understood to afford to the persons engaged in the linen manufacture here, as many comforts as are enjoyed by any similar description of persons in any other department of national industry; and that, notwithstanding the extraordinary influx of the natives of Ireland, who, from the low rate of wages they are accustomed to at home, are supposed to have contributed to the reduction of the wages of labour here much below their proper level".⁽¹⁾

(1) N.S.A. XI 26

When a new machine or a new material was introduced the demand for the products sometimes made for spasmodic inflation of wages, to be followed by as sudden a decline when their popularity waned, or the market became glutted by competition: "A remarkable change took place in the trade about 1820. The present weavers are employed in Canton crapes, Angola shawls, silk cypresses, silk harnishes, cotton harnishes, and a mixture of both. This is a complex manufacture, - requires the assistance of a draw-boy, - and sometimes expensive harnishes, but they make great wages when the trade is flourishing. When this business was introduced, some weavers made a great deal of money; and others would have found it equally profitable if they had been equally careful. About a fourth part of our weavers are still employed in working muslins, but very little can now be made by this kind of work".⁽¹⁾

In this same parish of Lochwinnoch there is a significant note upon the profits of the industrialists showing that no direct comparison of wages and profits was possible at this period of our history. Profits can/

(1) N.S.A. VII 102

can only be inferred from outward appearances, from the expansion of some businesses and the contraction, the mere survival or extinction of others. "Cotton-spinning is not now so profitable as it once was to the proprietors; but the spirit and extent to which it is carried on is, I should think, the best proof that it is not yet an unprofitable concern".⁽¹⁾

If it is impossible, in the absence of audited accounts and book-keeping open to public inspection, to compare wages and profits, some comparison can at least be drawn with the cost of living. We have seen that the price of labour was "higher in proportion to the price of grain than in former times".⁽²⁾ Actually in 1835 bread was around the moderate price of 4d. per four pound loaf though the corn laws were not yet repealed. The Minister of Dalry sees in the threat of repeal a barrier to agricultural development and argues against it:

"Perhaps the main cause of this unwillingness on the part of landlords (to encourage improvement) arises from the perpetual threatening of alterations in the corn laws, by a certain class of politicians, who hold forth/

(1) N.S.A. VII 104

(2) Page 168

forth their repeal as a panacea for every evil, whether real or imaginary, with which the state may be afflicted. When at present (1835) in this parish the best wheat will not average 4s.3d. per bushel, - a lower price than at the date of the last statistical account, and when good bread is sold for 4d. the four pound loaf, and fine at 5d., - it must appear how little reason there is to allege that the corn laws are a burden on the labouring classes".⁽¹⁾ The price of bread varied from year to year with the kind of harvest and this low cost of living which was true of Ayrshire in 1838 was not true of that Arbroath situation that we have instanced in 1842.

In Lochwinnoch wages are related directly to the price of food and clothes: "The young men and women employed in the cotton-mills can afford both to live and dress well, and their example tells upon the rest of the inhabitants..... Those who endure the heat, fatigue and long confinement of the mills require a generous diet and use it. They have generally butcher-meat at dinner, and sometimes at breakfast."⁽²⁾ Coal was both plentiful and cheap, being 5s. a ton in mining areas and sometimes as low as/

(1) N.S.A. V 231

(2) N.S.A. VII 99

as 2s.6d.⁽¹⁾ When carried a distance it could be as much
as 15s.⁽²⁾

An enormous drink bill in Barrhead is held to imply an enormous wage bill within the parish. "The inns and alehouses are in number 58, and the quantity of the spirits sold in them will be the best answer to the query, 'what are their effects on the morals of the people?' That quantity for eleven months only was 19,403 gallons, most of which is consumed on the Saturday evenings, and on the Lord's days; five hundred gallons more, the excise officer supposes, are used though not in his ledger, and which he is unable to detect, making in all, 19,903 gallons, at 8s.6d. on an average; and the amount on this average for the eleven months is £8,458:15:0½d. This expenditure proves the high wages which the people receive".⁽³⁾

Although with lairds, coal owners and industrialists the accounts afford no exact figures of income but leave us with a distinct impression of varied but substantial affluence, no indication is given of the financial position of the professional classes like lawyers and doctors. This must/

- (1) N.S.A. VI 467
- (2) N.S.A. VII 526
- (3) N.S.A. VII 349

must have been beyond their power to investigate and would in any case have been so varied as to defy analysis. The position, however, with regard to schoolmasters and to the clergy themselves is relatively clear. The schoolmaster was no better paid than the agricultural worker ~~and often~~ ~~sometimes even~~ without his perquisites. By contrast, the clergy had a position which was only surpassed by that of the laird and the wealthy merchant: "The clergymen of Glasgow have long moved in the first rank of society. Their dwelling houses and their domestic expenses are necessarily on a scale suited to their rank".⁽¹⁾

The salaries of teachers at the end of the eighteenth century were still on a scale laid down more than a hundred years before in the reign of William and Mary. During that time the value of money had decreased to a fourth part of what it was when the Act was passed. The scale had been originally stated in Scots money with a minimum of one hundred marks and a maximum of two hundred, which gave it an actual value in the seventeen nineties of £5.11s. and double that amount. This was at a time when the agricultural wage was often £8 - half way between the maximum/

(1) N.S.A. V 191

maximum and the minimum teacher's salary and the ploughman was receiving maintenance as well.

These incredibly low wages are often cited in conjunction. The schoolmaster of Heriot, Midlothian is also precentor, session clerk, beadle and grave digger but "his whole income does not exceed £8 sterling per annum. This with the paltry accommodation, holds out little encouragement to a teacher of merit. Indeed no man who possesses strength to lift a matlock or to wield a flail would accept such a disgraceful pittance".⁽¹⁾ Kirkpatrick-Juxta in Dumfriesshire presents the same picture. "The salary is only £11, and the wages for reading are no more than one shilling a quarter.... Had not the present teacher been disabled from working as a common mason he must have spurned such a livelihood as this".⁽²⁾

In spite of appearances, the forty years which elapsed between the statistical accounts brought about no radical change in the situation. An Act of 1803, making the first change in one hundred and five years, doubled the maximum salary and tripled the minimum, but still left the/

(1) O.S.A. XVI 54

(2) O.S.A. IV 520

the teacher near the level of unskilled labour. It is remarkable that almost 100% literacy should have been attained over most of Scotland on such a narrow financial basis. Thus the new Account repeats the tale of the Old: "Indeed education amongst us has all along been, and even at present is, in a very low state; and so long as decent pecuniary encouragement is wanting to that most useful class of citizens, the teachers of youth in elementary branches, we can scarcely expect any rapid change for the better. The income of many private teachers in this place (Paisley) and neighbourhood does not exceed £30 a year".⁽¹⁾ This signifies that when the unskilled labourer had 10s. per week, the teacher had 12s. and, with the fee system obtaining the latter figure may have required more pupils than were consistent with effective instruction: "The schools are all in great measure promiscuous. Each teacher has too many classes to attend to, and too many branches to be taught successfully. Then the teachers themselves are miserably paid and are thus forced to multiply their classes as a means of living".⁽²⁾

(1) N.S.A. VII 304

(2) N.S.A. VII 30

The interest of ministers in education was, of course, by no means confined to the economic realm. The schools were parochial, founded by the church and supervised by the Presbyteries. Teachers were made to sign the Confession of Faith and ministers acted as examiners in schools. But the endeavours of the church to obtain more adequate financial provision were continually frustrated by the landed interests. In 1782 the General Assembly appealed to the Government to remedy the situation: "Ninety years have produced such a change and so great improvements in the agriculture, navigation, commerce, arts, and riches of this country that £15 sterling at the end of last century may be considered as a better income than £45 sterling per annum at this present time. Suppose then that in Scotland there are 900 parochial schoolmasters which is very near the truth, 800 of them will be found struggling with indigence, inferior in point of income to 800 day labourers in the best cultivated parts of this island, and receiving hardly half the emoluments of the menial servants of country gentlemen and wealthy citizens".⁽¹⁾

This appeal proved in vain but it shows the practical sympathy of the clergy with the predicament of

(1) Quoted Mackinnon Op. Cit. 171

the teacher. There is a strong tendency to blame "the powers that be" in the shape of the heritors. Even the extremely modest competence, we have described, was sometimes paid with a grudge and even withheld:

"The importance of a parochial school seems not sufficiently attended to. The moral principles and future usefulness of the lower class of people depend very much upon their early education. This was the sense of the Legislature, when the law established a school, with a legal salary, in every parish in Scotland. Notwithstanding which it is but too evident that the schoolmaster, however valuable a member of society he may be, is often neglected and ill-used. How dishonourable to grudge and withhold from so useful an officer the small pittance which the law has assigned, as the wages of severe labour and attendance! How unjust when it is considered that the schoolmaster's salary is no part of the heritor's property; for when an estate is purchased that salary is deducted from the rental. The heritor in that case is only a trustee, and when he refuses or declines to pay his proportion, he keeps money in his pocket which does not in fact belong to him but to another".⁽¹⁾

(1) O.S.A. V 483

By what Professor Hume Brown describes as "the greatest economic revolution recorded in Scottish history"⁽¹⁾ and certainly by a great irony of history the clergy owed a very strong economic position to King Charles I. By his Act of Revocation of 1625 he recovered for the church a sufficiency of revenue from the lands of the Pre-Reformation church to endow a hierarchy, and since that hierarchy only functioned at brief intervals and never came fully into being there was very adequate provision for that parity of clergy which has been a normal feature of the establishment. Unlike the salaries of teachers who were paid a fixed sum under the two Acts of Parliament, the stipends of ministers were tied to grain prices and therefore to the cost of living. They varied from year to year but were in the main substantial.

Adam Smith sets forth with great precision the economic position of the clergy in the middle of the 18th century: "By a very exact account it appears that in 1755 the whole revenue of the Church of Scotland, including their glebe or church lands, and the rent of their manses or dwelling-houses, estimated according to a reasonable

(1) Quoted Rait Op. Cit. 189

valuation, amounted only to £68,514:13:5 $\frac{1}{12}$ d. This very moderate revenue affords a decent subsistence to nine hundred and forty-four ministers. The whole expense of the church, including what is occasionally laid out for building and repairing of churches, and of the manses of ministers, cannot well be supposed to exceed £80,000 or £85,000 a year. The most opulent church in Christendom does not maintain better the uniformity of faith, the fervour of devotion, the spirit of order, regularity and austere morals in the great body of the people, than this very poorly endowed Church of Scotland".⁽¹⁾

So great an authority cannot be gainsayed or set aside. But this estimate of the endowments as poor, is relative to the much greater proportion of the national income that established hierarchical churches had been in the habit of enjoying. Though but a fragment of the heritage of the pre Reformation church(wrested with great difficulty from the hands of the lairds)it yet afforded an average stipend of £72 throughout the country. When this is set against the £5:11s. or the £11:2s. of the teacher and the £6 with maintenance of menservants, it makes the ambition of Scottish parents to send a son to the ministry

⁽¹⁾ Adam Smith Op. Cit. 641

not altogether unworldly. Their status was high. True, there was great disparity of stipends but as well as rising with the price of grain there was much augmentation by local adjustment. One of the ministers in the Old Account (with seven of a family) speaks of "the living or more properly the starving"⁽¹⁾ but Jupiter Carlyle gives an impression that is broadly correct: "I must confess that I do not love to hear this church called a poor church, or the poorest church in Ch⁺istendom. I doubt very much that, if it were minutely enquired into, this is really the fact. But independent of that, I dislike the language of whining and complaint. Let us not complain of poverty, for it is a splendid poverty indeed! It is a paupertas fecunda virorum".⁽²⁾

Since most of the stipends are recorded in chalders with the annual value of a glebe and an allowance for communion elements, it is not easy to generalise upon their value in terms of money. In Glasgow stipends ranged from £150 to £500 giving an average of £268 to her fifty two ministers in 1831.⁽³⁾ From the Gazeteer of Scotland (1842) a figure somewhere between £200 and £250 would be

(1) O.S.A. VIII: 87

(2) Campbell, op. cit. 98.

(3) N.S.A. VI: 191.

the average for the whole country. For example at Dunlop, "the stipend is 14 chalders, one-half oatmeal, and the other barley, convertible into money at the fiar prices of the county. The average value for the last seven years has been £215. The allowances for communion elements is £8:6:8⁽¹⁾". There was also a glebe worth £14 a year. Taking stipends alone Ayrshire affords (at random) the following examples: Muirkirk £150, Newton-upon-Ayr £250, Straiton £225, Dailly £345, Stevenson £257, two charges in Kilmarnock £150, Angus shows much the same position: Brechin from £230 to £300, Dun £150, Panbride £245, Dundee first charge £347, five other charges £275.

Ministers of Dissenting congregations had amounts varying from £80 to £200 and chapels of ease had often £100. Except in the case of some Dissenters, a manse was included. Though the minimum of £150 for quoad omnia charges was not always reached, the maximum of £1000 in the West Parish, Greenock constituted great wealth for the times.

It was therefore from a vantage ground of considerable security and elevation that the ministers made their survey of the social life around them. At £200 per

annum they had eight times the day-labourer's wage. At the minimum of £150 they had six times this same basic wage compared with four times between the wars and less than twice at the present time. If it be charged against them that they were too far removed from poverty to enter with sympathy into the plight of its victims or that, by position, they were too much bound up with the status quo to take a lively interest in economic reform, we must acknowledge the weight of the objection.⁽¹⁾ But it may be said also that they were conscious of tremendous improvement in the economic situation of the vast majority, that the control of the depressions which vexed the wage earner is by no means yet assured⁽²⁾ and that 464 of their number took the risk of poverty in 1843.

(1) It is a branch of political wisdom, therefore, to save the Established clergy from this degradation (of poverty), which....might render them but little anxious to preserve the welfare and stability of the state.
- Principal Hill quoted N.S.A. VI 191.

(2) Report to United Nations.
The experts ... admitted that they could suggest no practical or acceptable measures that would make much difference if a slump as bad as that of the 1930's had to be faced.
Glasgow Herald, 14/1/52.

CHAPTER SIX.

CHILD LABOUR: LONG HOURS OF WORK.

"The progress of machinery will, we trust, set a limit to this evil." Rev. Robert Burns. op.cit. 158.

The inhumanities of Factory System: measures to mitigate them sponsored by land-owners: extreme complexity of political and economic situation - Tory Socialism of ministers: child labour deplored: Minister of Govan wishes well regulated Factory Act: benefits of the Act of 1833 in Montrose, Arbroath and Catrine: child labour a detriment to education: influenced by conditions abroad and foreign competition: self-acting mule replaces adult by child labour: mainly Irish children in cotton mills: child labour in Glasgow: hopes that masters of works will supervise welfare of workers: evils of specialisation in Dundee and Ochiltree: full horrors of child labour not revealed in the Accounts: the fourteen hour day: the sixteen hour day: greater leisure of former times: ministers' hopes that these things were a passing phase.

Amongst the impacts of industry upon the social life of Britain none have been more indelibly impressed upon the minds of posterity than its use of child labour and its long hours of work. Many things disadvantageous to the workers came into being - a multitude of new tasks involving great specialisation with little craftsmanship, a preponderance of indoor employments and, for vast numbers, the almost complete deprivation of leisure. In all these things, until the first really effective Factory Acts of the eighteen forties, men, women and children were indiscriminately included. But a favourable state of opinion, however arrived at, is necessary for the successful launching of reforms. Gestation must precede birth. The time lag between the birth of industries and the birth of measures to remedy the hard conditions of their employees has seemed to many unconscionably long. It was indeed some thirty years after the appearance of the spinning jenny before there were any measures on behalf of the children who had been immediately drawn into its service, and other forty years elapsed before really drastic action was taken to remove the scandal from industry as a whole.

Apart from Robert Owen these measures were broadly
the/

the work of the landed interest with Shaftesbury the moving spirit at their most fruitful stages. They were the outcome of a prolonged struggle in the course of which the wages of Shaftesbury's estate workers were brought to light. So mixed are men's motives and so complex the circumstances amid which they work that we find Cobden and Bright the champions of the people's bread amongst the most bitter opponents of Shaftesbury in his fight for their working conditions.⁽¹⁾ In the same way we find in the Scottish clergy, a uniform approval of the Factory Acts, and, an anticipation of their extension, combined with a coldness and hostility to the Trade Unions which had a kindred interest. For though preoccupied with wages and with a very different angle of approach, the latter also desired what was most necessary - the humanisation of the Factory System.

The clergy were tossed about between two conflicting climates of opinion. There was that freedom of the individual to work out his own economic salvation asserted by Adam Smith and becoming immediately influential - providing a philosophy of expansion appropriate to the times, and helping to transform Scotland into a wealthy country. There was also the principle of the moral and physical well being of the community threatened by the abuse of that freedom and calling for regulation/

(1) Marx. op.cit. 749.

regulation. The Encyclopaedia Britannica of 1878 puts it somewhat naively: "As yet the freedom of the adult male labourer has been held sacred from the interference of the legislature, but it is necessarily involved, to some extent, in the protection exercised over persons (women and children) whose co-operation is necessary to his work. The gradual rise of the important principle that, in the interests of the moral and physical well-being of the community, the labour of women and children should be restricted by law within reasonable limits, may be seen by a glance at the Factory Bills introduced into Parliament since the beginning of the century."⁽¹⁾

This conflict between freedom and the regulation of its unsocial tendencies is never finally resolved; and it gave rise at this time to an enormous political confusion in which the clergy were unhappily embroiled. Though the position was clearer in England, it was a kind of tripartite struggle with Radical mill-owners equally antagonistic to Trade Unionists and Tories. This situation was dear to the heart of Marx, and of the benefits of the Factory Acts he can only say, "when thieves fall out honest men come by their own."⁽²⁾ In so far as they took a particular line through/

(1) En.Brit. 9th Ed. VIII. 844.

(2) Marx. op.cit. 747.

through this confusion (and it is not far) ministers stood with landowners against industrialists and with industrialists against organised labour. As humanitarians and sponsors of education they wished to see the end of child labour; as spectators of the industrial struggle they were extremely partisan and wished the end of trade unions. From one of their number there comes the grave reproach: "Religious men are conservative and may be conservative of a most dangerous error of thinking that working men are mere machines."⁽¹⁾ This minister, however, felt too, as others must have done, that the whole situation would be improved by further technical progress - ⁽²⁾ and here the organised worker was often in violent opposition. ⁽³⁾ In face of such complexity, criticism must always be hesitant. On behalf of the few who saw industry 'at its worst it may be said that their very bewilderment at the dilemmas of the age was part of the mental climate requisite to reform. They knew that something must be done but were not sure what it was.

Relative to the conditions of medieval labour, the long hours of industrial work were not without compensation. The minister of Larbert gives a balanced statement of loss and gain under the new dispensation: "An inhabitant of the parish in/

(1) Burns. op.cit. 164.

(2) Page 197

(3) Page 241

in the old bygone times did his work leisurely and at his ease, much in the same way as a gentleman works who takes care not to fatigue himself. But now-a-days, the population of Great Britain is more crowded, and consequently men must work harder to earn their daily bread and to obtain other necessities of life. In compensation, the workman of the present day has more of the conveniences of life; he is better lodged, better fed, and better clothed than the countryman of the former period."⁽¹⁾

When we come to the position of children, our knowledge is limited as to the hours they had worked before industry appeared or as to the ages at which they commenced employment. No doubt it was, in the main, the seasonal work of agriculture and could scarcely have exceeded the hours of factory work or been earlier undertaken. But the deterioration in the circumstances in which they came to be employed in mines and factories was disastrous. The minister of Larbert has no doubt that this transition from fields to factories, is wholly detrimental, but exhibits a certain fatalism with regard to its development: "As there were no enclosures, the cattle were kept from trespassing on the corn by a boy or girl as a cowherd. The children at the age of seven or eight were sent

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 366.

out to this occupation, and thus they began the world. It was certainly a more healthful employment than that which falls to the lot of the cotton factory children of the present day, who are condemned by fate to make their first steps in this valley of tears, confined all day in the unwholesome dusty air of a close room." (1)

Till 1833 the Factory Acts made little appreciable difference. The Act of 1802 was almost confined to cotton mills and only to those which received boarded-out children. It did not extend to factories where children residing in the neighbourhood were employed. Other acts were so piecemeal, covering one type of factory and not another, as to be largely inoperative. The Rev. M. Leishman of Govan shows therefore a shrewd insight in calling for "a well-regulated factory act."

At a short distance from Govan a silk factory had been erected in 1824. It was not covered by the Factory Acts but its conditions were better than in the cotton mills subject to regulation. "The number of persons employed in this factory averages 250. Of these, the larger proportion are children, none of whom are under eight years of age. The grown up people are at work eleven hours a day, and the children from ten to eleven hours. The factory generally stops at

seven o'clock in the evening, with the exception of Saturdays, on which it stops at three o'clock in the afternoon. The wages of the men vary from 12s. to 18s, of the young women from 6s. to 7s., and of the children from 2s. to 5s. week. The healthy appearance of the children connected with this work, in consequence of its lower temperature, and the great care that is taken to produce proper ventilation, is in general very different from the sallow complexions of those young creatures, whose unhappy destiny it is to be immured in a cotton factory. Every benevolent mind, however, must desire to see a well-regulated factory act, framed to secure to children of both sexes, before they are admitted into our public works, the rudiments, at least, of a good scriptural education."⁽¹⁾

When the factory acts were still rudimentary - the Act of 1833 limiting the employment of children between nine and thirteen to a forty-eight hour week, and only in certain factories - their operation in the spinning mills of Montrose was of material benefit to education. The minister records this as a step in the right direction: "Although it cannot be said that the means of instruction are within the reach of all, and, although there are some who can neither

(1) N.S.A. VI. 697.

read nor write, in consequence of the carelessness of parents in neglecting to avail themselves of these means, yet there is still a want of public schools for a class who do not altogether stand in need of gratis teaching, but who cannot afford to pay the fees charged at any of the public schools..... Many of the teachers have evening schools for the benefit of such as have to work during the day; and in this respect, the late Act of Parliament, shortening the time at the spinning mills, has been found to be very beneficial - many of the young people who work at the mills attending these schools after working hours." (1)

For the first time in 1833, factory inspectors were appointed to watch over the working of the Act and provision was made for the part time education of children who were employed. These remedial measures were highly gratifying but still deemed insufficient by the lay contributor to the Account of St. Vigean, Arbroath: "To the improvement consequent on the introduction of the Factory Act, some good is also to be attributed, and in nothing more than the necessity which it imposes on all mill-owners to observe the same stated hours for working. In this respect, and in the restraint caused by medical certificates, and the visits of the inspectors,

(1) N.S.A. XI. 286.

against the employment, whether from the cupidity of parents or the avariciousness of masters, of children of a tender age more than a given number of hours daily, the Act is doubtless beneficial. The hours of labour which it prescribes are twelve for each of the first five days of the week, and nine on Saturday, three quarters of an hour being allowed for breakfast, and a similar time for dinner. Six holidays are allowed in the course of a year. Children between the age of nine and thirteen are not permitted to work above eight hours per day, but of these none are employed in the factories here. Ample time is thus allowed for education before entering the mills; and from the excellent seminary recently opened in connection with the Church of Inverbrothock, and other means of instruction, we would fondly hope, though in the present state of trade it is almost too much to expect, that the day is not far distant when no young person will be found within the factories of this place, who has not received the elements at least of a plain education."⁽¹⁾

In these commendations of the Factory Acts the emphasis has been less on the hardships of the children than on the neglect of education entailed by their employment.

(1) N.S.A. XI. 505.

This emphasis appears also in the appreciation of the cotton spinners of Catrine in Ayrshire who had provided a teacher for their young employees prior to the Act of 1833. "Before the new regulations with regard to the education of the young persons employed in cotton factories were introduced, the Catrine company, at their own expense, provided a schoolmaster, to whom all who were connected with the works had, and still have, access immediately after the labours of the day are over, without any charge whatever. From 200 to 300 individuals have been in the habit of availing themselves of this privilege thereby laying the foundation of future happiness and future usefulness to themselves and others."⁽¹⁾

The reasons for child labour have been cited as "the cupidity of parents and the avariciousness of masters." The minister of Kilsyth thought that it resided in "the poverty and shameful recklessness of parents." To him there is scandal in the positive harm to the children as well as in the loss of education: "A good many children are taught gratis, the heritors and session, at the recommendation of the minister and session, paying the teacher a modified payment for a considerable number of children of poor or dissipated parents. Notwithstanding

(1) N.S.A. V. 141.

of this liberality, too many are imperfectly taught; the poverty or shameful recklessness of the parents tempting them to apprentice the poor children at the early age of eight, nine and ten! In this case, the children are apt to lose soon the little they have learnt. In some cases, they attend an evening school by way of redeeming the time; but this is a very partial remedy, and often not improved."⁽¹⁾

Perhaps the bias of the clergy towards capital and enterprise reveals itself in the tendency of the Dundee minister, to lay more blame upon parents than upon employers for the very early employment of children. He is doubtful too, if legislation can be fruitfully applied between master and servant. As for long hours, they are due, in his mind, mostly to the "avidity" of the workers for higher wages. He gives, in fact, a far happier picture of mill life than that presented by Government Commissions of enquiry. His opening sentence reveals his uneasiness about the whole situation and admits that other views may well be taken: "The influence of the linen manufacture on the health of those employed in it will be differently estimated by different persons; but generally speaking, there does not appear to be any operation connected with it particularly prejudicial to health, unless it be the too long hours of

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 165.

labour to which some of the youths of more tender years are no doubt exposed. The mills do not require to be overheated for health; indeed they are well ventilated, while the cleansing and weaving departments seem to be as favourable to health and longevity as any other kind of labour. If some regulation were adopted as to the age at which young persons should be allowed to enter the mills, and also as to the number of hours per day during which they should be employed in them, all parties would be benefited. But it is extremely difficult to legislate between master and servant in all cases; and it will be found, on enquiry, that the wants of parents, more than any desire on the part of their employers, have crowded our manufacturing establishments with very young persons; while an avidity for higher wages than the manufacturers could afford to give for a shorter period, has induced them sometimes to protract their labour beyond what is good for their health. After every drawback, however, persons visiting the mills and manufactories will see with pleasure the appearance of health and cheerfulness everywhere exhibited. In health, every precaution is taken to guard against disease; and when any epidemic prevails, every attention is paid to such as are overtaken by it, and all due means used for their recovery." (1)

(1) N.S.A. XI. 28.

Much of the attitude of the early industrial era to long hours and child labour can only be appreciated when we have abstracted our own ideas of comfort and propriety. Not only the greed of industrialists and of parents dictated the labour of children, but the competition of similar or lower standards in other countries. "A witness to the Third Report upon Emigration from the United Kingdoms (1827) made colourful reference to the steamboats as floating bridges over which there passed daily such numbers of the poor Irish labourers that it was certain, the wages in one kingdom being five or six times the wages in the other, that the potato fed population would in time bring down the wheat fed population to its own level."⁽¹⁾

The standard of living abroad was always influencing the situation in Scotland. The minister of Barrhead saw the employment of children as an answer to foreign competition. For him the choice lay between busy mills working under hard conditions but bringing wealth to the neighbourhood, and mills standing idle with the consequent destitution. At the time he is writing a new invention replacing adult by child labour has saved the situation. But the economic salvation of his parish is not to be won at any price, for he says also that the

(1) Handley. op.cit. 22.

working hours of children ought to be reduced.

"Great advantages will be derived from this machine, (the self-acting mule) by the trade. By it, the full grown operative is dispensed with, and only children required for piecing up the threads, who are now paid one-half more than formerly. Another advantage is obtained, by the mule producing about one-fifth more yarn, whilst the saving in wages will be about two thirds. A third advantage it gives is, that it brings the workers more under control of the masters. The vexation given to the masters by the union of the workers was great. By these unions, under the plea of protecting their trade, they annoyed and distressed their employers time after time, with insolent and unwarranted interferences and restrictions. It was to get rid of this annoyance, by a "self-actor", that the masters were led to make so many attempts to dispense with their servides altogether. This they have now accomplished - the service of children only is required. This is generally the result of all combinations; they ultimately injure themselves. Another important result of this "self-actor", is that by diminishing the wages two-thirds, it will enable the spinners of Great Britain to compete successfully with the cheap labour of the Continent."(1)

Nowhere does the conflict between laissez-faire and the humanitarianism which produced the Factory Acts appear more clearly than in the mind of this minister of Barrhead. He knew that the cotton trade having come into being, must continue, as the mainstay of the large population it had attracted. If, in the previous quotation, he indicates that it must exist almost by any means, he recognised also its baleful effects on the lives of the people. He it is who calls for "radical reform" of the whole industry. He appears to be in a great dilemma, both on the side of the masters and on the side of the children; but decidedly unsympathetic to the men. All the conflicts of the time are visible in his parish and meet in his bosom. Antipathy to trade unions is marked and to that we shall return. The men whose services he sees so lightly replaced by a new machine are all protagonists of Reform. He himself opposes the Reform movement. But the Great Reform Bill was supported by the industrialists whom the men "annoyed and distressed."

Thus exultation over the self-acting mule soon gives way to lamentation over the malign influence of the cotton-mills upon their employees: "The number of working days in the cotton-mills are six, and the number of hours in the week,

sixty-nine. Those of the printers, in summer, are from six in the morning till six in the evening, while those of the bleachers are from eleven to twelve hours per day, or seventy two hours per week. In all the works, the children work the same hours as men. That the wages afford a fair remuneration and support to those engaged in these works must appear evident from the high wages that are paid them, and the vast sums they spend on drinking. However much it may be disguised or denied, those works have a powerful tendency to affect both health and morals. Among them you rarely find an individual of the strength, size, and fresh complexion, which distinguishes the ancient inhabitants. They are comparatively small, sickly complexioned and are old men apparently, at forty five years. Few see three score and ten..... shortening the hours of children's labour, and giving them before they go into these works, a thorough Christian education and Christian example, with a strict but kind surveillance of the masters and overseers, appear to us to be the only means of correcting and improving the system."⁽¹⁾

A report from a manager of Monteith's factory in Blantyre indicates that the children of the immigrant Irish

(1) N.S.A. VII. 338.

were the most frequent victims of early industrial employment. Here is a pathetic reminder that, difficult as conditions in Scotland were, there was far more destitution and actual starvation for multitudes across the North Channel. All the stigmas that lie upon early industrialism must be measured against the failure of the agriculture of the British Isles (and especially of Ireland) to support the natural increase of population. According to this witness there was less economic pressure and a higher ethos amongst the native Scots; parents were more discriminating about their children's welfare. "The Irish, or descendants of Irish, are found to predominate in all spinning and weaving mills. This is in great measure due to the aversion that the Scots had of allowing their children to go into a cotton mill when the trade was started in the west of Scotland..... Few Scottish families could be prevailed on to go into a cotton mill; they looked upon it as a sort of degradation. Hand loom weaving at that time was good, more money could be made at it than in any mill."⁽¹⁾

When the fare from Ireland was, at its lowest,
THREE PENCE⁽¹⁾ return, and normally a few shillings, the abundance

(1) Handley. op.cit. 107.

(2) Handley. op.cit. 26.

of this labour in Glasgow may well be imagined. It helps to explain - though it may not justify - the "respectable persons" who compiled the Old Account of Glasgow in their acceptance of child labour as a matter of course. It was the usage of the times and had been so from time immemorial and, if the new conditions of this employment in mines and factories were indescribably worse, they seemed the only alternative to starvation for the poorest families. We have seen, in the Glasgow Account, a view that the opportunities for children in industry were a counterpoise to prostitution; we now see their employment taken for granted, with the reservation that it is harmful to education. "It may be proper here to observe, that in the present state of the city it is of the greatest importance to prevail on parents to send their children to school at six years of age; for if their education is then neglected, it is in great danger of being lost forever. The manufacturers find employment for children between seven and eight years of age, and even then their work will bring from ls. to ls.6d. per week - this becomes a temptation scarcely to be resisted by poor families - the only method therefore, by which the education of the poor can be secured is by giving it early, and supporting the Sunday Schools, which may prevent such education as they have from being lost."⁽¹⁾

(1) O.S.A. V. 530.

With an incidental reference to the limitations imposed by the Factory Acts on child labour in cotton, the minister of New Kilpatrick objects to their employment in general, on grounds of morality and education. He envisages too, the extension of that moral oversight (accredited to lairds in the old hierarchical establishments) to the masters of public works; they were to set an example, and to enforce, with economic sanctions, a discipline. With the numbers engaged, however, in the larger mills this personal supervision inevitably devolved upon managers, a position less auspicious for such a purpose than that of the laird or chieftain. Indeed the continual resurgence of Unions shows that sympathy between masters and men was insufficient to form a profitable basis for this oversight. The minister, at least, desired a new community of spirit where this was lacking and almost impossible to obtain:

"Factory work by collecting a multitude of both sexes together, is injurious to morals; and the demand for the labour of children, which, though now checked at the cotton-factory, continues at printfields, threatens to increase the evil. It is an evil, however, which the masters of such works have it much in their power to remedy or prevent, by

making a careful selection of workers, by dismissing bad characters from their employment, by providing for the education of the children, and by encouraging attendances on religious ordinances." (1)

As statisticians the clergy were recorders of what was; it is only incidentally that we find their sense of the fitness of things. Hence we have their moralising about the recklessness of parents, the avidity of workers and the avarice of employers; and sometimes their extenuation of grim conditions, alleging economic necessity, previous and prevailing standards, and foreign competition. The minister of Dundee saw the type of work itself as less fitted to the human constitution; there was little creative interest and nothing to relieve the monotony of the small tasks attendant upon the machine. It is an important insight. For the sudden change from the old traditional ways of life more than any sudden moral decline had brought a social blindness to the fact that work involved far more travail than it had done before: "The general use of machinery has almost wholly superseded that of the spinning-wheel, and sent the females to a less appropriate labour for their support. Old men and old women no longer able to undergo the labour of the loom, and young persons of both sexes not

(1) N.S.A. VIII. 59.

yet strong enough for that work, are employed in winding for the warper and the weaver, and thereby contribute something to the general funds of the family."⁽¹⁾ In other words craftsmanship has ceased, and the new occupations, though remunerative, are much less congenial to the human spirit.

In the same vein the minister of Ochiltree notices the detrimental effects of great specialisation and of long hours spent in indoor employments. "A considerable number of the young females in the village, and in some parts of the country, are employed in sewing muslin - an employment which in most instances unfits them for other occupations, and besides, it frequently injures their health, and leaves them very helpless when they get houses of their own, as to the management of their domestic concerns."⁽²⁾

Apart from references to pale faces, malnutrition, stunted growth and early mortality, the full horrors of the conditions amid which children worked do not appear in the Accounts. The terrible tale of children in the coal mines is passed over in silence; its existence can only be gathered from the record of the numbers employed. The Accounts present a general picture: Government commissions which examine

(1) N.S.A. XI. 27.

(2) N.S.A. V. 113.

special cases give an impression of far harsher conditions. Thus in Govan there is the record of extensive collieries but no indication that they contained anything like this: "Dixon's Govan Colliery. No. 6. Francis Conery, aged 9. Is a trapper (i.e. opens and shuts the trap door ventilator when the hutches go past). He comes at 6 a.m. and goes at 6. He gets down and up by the engine. He sits on a board in a niche in the wall without a light, quite in the dark and holds a rope which is fastened to the door, and when the carriage has passed he shuts it again. He has some bread, tea and cheese sent down by the engine and brought to him by a driver, or if slack he can run and get it himself. It serves him for the day as long as he is down the pit. He has not eaten all he got this morning yet. He sometimes falls asleep at his door when he is on the night shift; this is one week out of three. When he is asleep the driver raps at the door and he wakes and opens it. He gets 8d a day, and is "no able" to be a putter yet, but when he can he shall get 1s. a day. His brother is a trapper here also and is older than he is. Neither of them went to any school day or night." (1)

No horror like this appears in the Accounts. The eighty boys and girls recorded as earning from 9d to 2s. per

(1) Quoted. Handley. op.cit. 112.

day at Bannockburn would likely be enduring similar privations. And so it would be at Tranent and wherever coal was being worked; for the pits were not touched by legislation till Shaftesbury's measures of 1842-43.

Even a factual statement of the hours worked at the cotton mills of Stanley in Perthshire may cover a multitude of miseries: "Work at the cotton mill begins at half-past five in the morning and ends at seven in the evening, with the intermission of an hour and a half for meals. On Saturday work ends at three o'clock in the afternoon. Children begin their work at the mills at a quarter of an hour to 10 a.m. and end it at 3 p.m., that they may attend school. All in health when well employed can earn an adequate livelihood."⁽¹⁾ Happily the children have been freed from the twelve hours that their parents worked. They are working just over four hours, but conditions in cotton mills had been so terrible that they were the first to provoke a public outcry and to have their hours reduced.

The 68 and 72 hour week in factories was the usage of the times and in the 1830's children often worked the latter figure. But for really stupendous hours of work we must turn to those home industries where economic pressure was at its

(1) N.S.A. X. 441.

worst. The fourteen hour day is not uncommon here. The comment of the Rev. Gavin Lang, grandfather of an Archbishop, is factual rather than remedial: "A considerable number of females are engaged at the loom, at which they spend usually fourteen hours each working day. For some years past the remuneration has not at all been adequate to their support, but it is now much improved. Such a mode of life is not beneficial to the health or morality of females in particular."⁽¹⁾

Women are pressed to work even sixteen hours at sewing and embroidering. This is sympathetically recorded by the minister of Dalry. "A good sewer may earn 1d each hour at ordinary white work. For a short period during summer, when embroidery is brisk, 1s6d. to 2s. per day is occasionally earned at from fourteen to sixteen hours sitting. But this is gained at the probable sacrifice of health."⁽²⁾

Sometimes those extraordinary working hours produced little more than half the day-labourer's wage; a fourteen hour day could spell not only ill health but poverty. "In the town of Leslie, weaving is carried on to a very considerable extent, there being 260 weavers in it... A good weaver can only earn at the rate of 1s. per day, working twelve or fourteen

(1) N.S.A. VI. 298.

(2) N.S.A. V. 233.

hours." Conditions in the factories of this place are better financially but the rates are dependent on piece-work: "There are six flax mills in the parish, employing altogether upwards of 200 people. In these mills they are employed twelve hours per day, or seventy two hours in the week. The men's wages average 15s.-18s. per week, the hacklers from 11s. to £1; these in general work by the piece, so that it in a great measure depends on their industry and sobriety. The wages of boys and girls, from 2s.-2s.6d. per week. These when they have been in the mill for three or four years, are able to make full wages. Women's wages from 4s.6d-6s.6d per week. There are none employed in any of these mills, so far as can be discovered, under ten years of age."⁽¹⁾

It is a strange paradox that the use of labour saving devices increased the hours of labour, not only in the domestic industries depressed by competition, but in the mills where the most up-to-date inventions were being used.

L.P. Jacks remarks facetiously how, "inventions which ease the burden in detail (e.g. the telephone) have the effect, by accumulation, of increasing the total burden to be borne, so that men may become worn out in the use of labour saving devices. And many do."⁽²⁾ But the end result of machinery has been to

(1) N.S.A. IX.119.

(2) Jacks. op.cit. 139.

lighten labour, to improve the standard of living and to extend the hours of leisure. It is a commentary on human cupidity that the logical result should be so long in making its appearance. There was a great advance in the wealth of the country and - when trade was normal - in the wages and living standards of industrial workers but it was paid for at an enormous price in leisure and health. James Cameron, surgeon in Tain, says of his townsmen under the stress of the new occupations: "Doubtless they have of late greatly improved as to enterprise and habits of steady industry; but while they have lost much of that laziness and waywardness imputed to the unmodified Highlanders, I fear they have lost much of his free and serenely joyous spirit."⁽¹⁾ This is the same doubtful balance of loss and gain, echoed by the clergy.

Perhaps no society in all history enjoyed so little leisure. In this particular the previous agrarian economy had a distinct advantage and some pictures of Medievalism which overlook its serfdom are, by contrast, like heaven upon earth: "The citizens of the Middle Ages participated in a never ending round of social occasions. They were well provided for with the necessary community facilities. They had not one but many buildings available for a rampant club life, and for

(1) Quoted Ferguson. op.cit. 6.

active leisure-time activities. Leisure, to be sure, was not indulged in every single day or for definitely set hours as in our culture. The allotment of leisure time followed a different principle. Some one hundred days or so of the year were dedicated to different saints and set apart for rest and merry-making."⁽¹⁾ Apart from the fifty two Sabbath days, and these were already invaded in the iron works of Lanarkshire, many in Scotland must have enjoyed no leisure at all - for leisure when it did appear, had the melancholy character of unemployment.

The full pathos of this situation can be read in the minister of Dysart's account of the weavers in his parish: "The weavers are engaged all the six days of the week, when they can find employment. Some of them, indeed, are obliged to work from four or five in the morning till ten or eleven at night; and after all their industry, will not earn more than 5s. or 6s. perweek. It is almost needless to add, that this is but poor remuneration for their labour; that the effects of such long hours on their health are anything but good, and are very adverse to mental improvement."⁽²⁾

To sum up: the inventions which brought wealth to the country as a whole, brought to multitudes hardships never

(1) REIMER,
(1) Transactions of Wisconsin Academy.
XL. Part 2. 35.

(2) N.S.A. IX. 138.

previously experienced except in famine or war. The horrors of the Factory System which have deeply coloured later opinion, monopolising some descriptions of it like Tom Johnston's, do not bulk so largely with the ministers who saw that it had advantages as well and were not aware of an alternative means of livelihood for those employed. But they are at no pains to hide that many grievous burdens were being borne, sometimes with patience, sometimes, as we shall see, with bitterness. In the matter of child labour they are on the whole less the products of their generation than its critics. If some accept it as a matter of course, others show strong disapproval - by their indictment of the avarice of employers and the recklessness and sometimes blameworthy poverty of parents and by their appreciation of the Factory Acts. They postulated both the reform of the individual and the reform of the system. How successful social legislation could be is shown by the decline of children employed in factories from 56,000 in 1835 to 29,000 in 1838.⁽¹⁾ These are the figures for Great Britain and the Act of 1835 compared with later Acts was but a half-measure.

Long hours, they regarded as a menace to bodily and spiritual health but, in the light of the time, they

(1) Encyc.Brit. 9th Ed. VIII. 845.

accepted them as largely inevitable. The seventy-two hour week for adults is recorded without much in the nature of protest because many were working longer and earning less; and their emphasis upon this terrible predicament has sometimes the note of "the song of the shirt". Some wish more intervention by the state and some are doubtful how much legislation can in fact achieve. They had great hopes in further technical progress. They relied most upon the fortitude and resourcefulness of each individual to establish or retrieve his own position.

The whole picture was by no means unhappy. Already a greatly increased population enjoyed, in many respects, a greater material welfare than Scotland had previously known. It was no unwarranted optimism to see that prosperity continually increasing and extending to all. Those oppressed by hard conditions must bear and endure till better days would most certainly arrive. Hearers must often have been exhorted to wipe out the social scandals of the time in terms like this:

"Arise young men (of Glasgow) and form the mutual covenant that when that wealth becomes yours, you will make a different city of it from what it is at present - that the famishing thousands of its poor shall no longer make it the opprobrium of the empire - and that the education, both secular

and religious, of the people shall flow as freely and copiously as the waters of its river."⁽¹⁾

(1) Rev. W. Anderson. op.cit. 274.

(Minister of St John's Relief.)

CHAPTER SEVEN.

TRADE UNIONS: POLITICS.

"When the government and aristocracy of this country had subordinated persons to things, and treated the one like the other - the poor, with some reason, and almost in self defence, learned to set up rights above duties". Coleridge's Table Talk 155. "A spirit of insubordination and dissatisfaction seems to be spreading rapidly amongst the working classes". Employers' Report, quoted N.S.A. VII.338. Summary. The political background: Reform overdue: Question of church and state assumes new importance: The church looks back to 1688: Scotland ruled by an oligarchy: suspicion of democratic movements: Galt: Carlyle: hostility to trade unions, Airdrie: futility of strikes, Lanark: restrictive practices, Paisley: unions condemned, women workers found more docile, Glasgow: savings bank a better weapon than unions: strike at Catrine: Govan minister less hostile to unions: detrimental to workers to have political interest: Owen's experiment: Demonstrations of 1819, Barrhead: Chartist literature condemned: Lapslie of Campsie: Balfron minister wonders that discontent is not greater: Demonstrations in Glasgow: Battle of Bonnymuir: "Pearly Wilson".

Much of the clerical outlook on politics can be gathered from John Galt's Annals of the Parish. It was in a word, contentment with the Revolution Settlement of 1688. That settlement was over a hundred years old and symbolised the Covenanting Triumph; but whether administered by Whigs or Tories, it was profoundly oligarchic. There were great achievements to its credit - the evolution of cabinet government and the foundation of a great empire. It maintained a large measure of internal peace; it prosecuted in the main successful wars; and showed its ability to weather great storms in the long struggle with Revolutionary France and with Napoleon. But with the influence of the French Revolution, with the progress of industry and the increase of population it was becoming less and less expressive of the political consciousness of the nation. Political aspirations were stirring in sections unrepresented in the government; a growing multitude was alienated from the regime; what has been termed the organic relationship between state and society was growing weaker. The wise statesmanship of Pitt envisaged reform but he was forestalled by the events of 1789 and the suspicion they cast upon all popular aspiration. The unreformed Parliament was given another forty years' lease of life.

Before these forty years were over the question of church and state arose with renewed urgency, for the existing relationship between the two had been sanctioned by long usage and the balance of power in the state was changing. In the national churches of both Scotland and England interest was concentrated afresh upon the freedom of the church rather than upon the great social changes that were affecting that freedom. Newman and Chalmers, in their own different ways were seeking the freedom of the church. Both found their social ideals in the past. In a personal reminiscence of Newman, A.W. Hutton says, "he seldom expressed any decided opinion on politics. No doubt he was at bottom a Tory of the old school." (1) Of Chalmers, who expressed decided opinions, the same might be said.

The Revolution Settlement was the high water mark of liberty for the church of Scotland as Presbyterian. This liberty, was curtailed in 1712 by patronage which became the prolonged issue between church and state; but the wider guarantees of the Protestant faith, made the clergy conservative and, in the main, opposed to

(1) The Expositor 4th Series II 310.

Reform. Many must have shared Chalmers' view of the Great Reform Bill - "a great deal too plebeian for me". (1)

The oligarchy which ruled Britain in the 18th century took its very narrowest form in Scotland. Here the brilliance of philosophers and men of letters was only matched by the obscurity of politicians-for BUTE, the most noteworthy exception, was no ornament, and the names of any but a very few of the representative peers and commoners who sat at Westminster from 1707 to 1832 would be hard to recall. Henry Dundas, occupying high offices from 1766 to 1806 exemplifies the autocracy to which Scotland was subject. Referring particularly to his Home Secretaryship (1791 - 94) Lord Cockburn says, "he was the absolute dictator of Scotland, and had the means of rewarding submission and of suppressing opposition, beyond what were ever exercised in modern times by one person, in any portion of the empire". (2) Feeling against this ruling junta does not seem to have run high, until the French Revolution dissipated the political apathy of the masses; from that time onwards for more than thirty years, repression against popular movements was severe. "The whole morality of patriotism

(1) Mathieson Op.Cit. 305.

(2) Cockburn Op.Cit. 338.

was sunk in the single object of acknowledging no defect or grievance in our own system in order that we might be powerful abroad." (1) Stimulated by fear, the despotism was by no means benevolent. Suspensions of Habeus Corpus, Combination Laws, and savage penalties imposed upon popular leaders, were but some of the replies of the ruling class to the threat to their position. But the Repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824 is a token of the relaxation which was taking place before the Government itself became more broadly based in 1832.

Democracy was an importation into this country. Its ideas developed in France and America became an object both of hope and of dread - of hope to the uprooted masses of the new industrial areas but of dread to all who feared a conflagration as destructive as that in France. To the latter class belonged the clergy of the Establishment. For them, the Revolution Settlement of 1688 had been the climax to a heroic struggle; it secured the triumph of the Protestant faith; under it, the state acting as a kind of night watchman, maintained the framework of a society that was in the main healthy and filled as in the

Cockburn,
(1) Quoted Rait Op.Cit. 305.

"Annals of the Parish" with a rich community life. For in a strange way" Scotland was at once more feudal and more equalitarian than England".⁽¹⁾ To their spiritual overseers it seemed better for the people to endure, the ills that they had than to fly to others that France exhibited. With "hypothetical" politics, as they described the utopianism of subversive movements, they would have nothing to do. Yet shorn of their theoretical extremes it was in fact the seeds of democracy that they despised.

According to John Galts' cleric, there was in his parish an element that was never fully assimilated into its life - the new cotton mill with its largely imported population. It brought wealth but it also brought discontent; new ideas were abroad amongst its workers: philanthropy and utilitarianism were being discussed. He thought them new names for things that the gospel had always included but they caused him great uneasiness and he never came to the best of terms with their adherents. He thought that whatever troubles could affect the people, they were as nothing compared to the ancient usurpation of their religious freedom. As things were, the Ark of the Covenant was not threatened by the ruling powers, but

rather supported by them and liable to endangered by any force that overturned them. Therefore, while he does not preach passive obedience he comes very near it. In his parting exhortation to his parishioners he more or less exhibits the clerical outlook in its distrust of the new ideas and of the activities and institutions which they inspired:

"Reflect on this, my young friends, and know, that the best part of a Christian's duty in this world of much evil, is to thole and suffer with resignation as lang as it is possible for human nature to do. I do not counsel passive obedience: that is a doctrine that the Church of Scotland can never abide; but the divine right of resistance, which in the days of her trouble she so bravely asserted against popish and prelatic usurpations, was never resorted ^{to} till the attempt was made to remove the ark of the tabernacle from her. I, therefore, counsel you, my young friends, not to lend your ears to those that trumpet forth their hypothetical politics; but to believe that the laws of the land are administered with a good intent, till in your own homes and dwellings ye feel the presence of the oppressor - then, and not till then, are ye free to gird your loins for battle - and woe to

him, and woe to the land where that is come to, if the sword be sheathed till the wrong be redressed." (1)

The trouble was that so many did feel the presence of the oppressor in their homes and dwellings in the shape of insecurity, poor remuneration and oppressive conditions of work. And it was hard for many to believe, when the like of Lord Braxfield, (1722 - 99) the hanging Judge, had been on the bench, that the laws of the land were administered with good intent. True, the minister of Dalmailing has noticed the physical condition of the people of Glasgow much deteriorated from his student days, and this is noticeable and no more amongst the cotton operatives of his parish. Indeed he is thankful that his pastoral staff has fallen where conditions are so idyllic. But for him religious freedom is so primary that the other freedoms are scarcely even secondary. And this is the bias of the whole established clergy. In the sense that future developments endorsed his insights, Thomas Carlyle was more prophetic in the social sphere than the orthodox. While not unduly fertile in remedy he saw more deeply the growing weakness of the social fabric. Without accepting

(1) Galt. Op.Cit 8.

Sydney Webb's caricature of orthodoxy we may accept his estimate of Carlyle as historically just: "The first man who really made a dint on the individualist shield was Carlyle, who knew how to compel men to listen to him. Oftener wrong than right in his particular proposals, he managed to keep alive the faith in nobler ends, than making a fortune in this world and saving one's soul in the next." (1) In studying the social discontents and political aspirations of this era Galt may be taken as representative of orthodoxy, and Carlyle as a rebel who saw the tremendous gravity of the social situation.

In the previous chapter we have reviewed many instances of adverse employment. That the ministers record these with a deep consciousness of their unfitness and impropriety undoubtably places them amongst the creators of that public opinion which makes possible and institutes reform. Unfortunately for their later reputation they entertained - many of them more deeply than John Galt - a suspicion of all movements amongst the workers themselves to remedy these conditions. Strikes are anathema and unions, which

(1) Webb Quoted "The Listener" 1951, 1010.

are struggling both to organise themselves and to create a bargaining power, are regarded as subversive of all authority. Unions had in fact, at this time, the nature of secret societies which can so easily multiply the fears of those outside them. Their immediate actions had sometimes the effect of worsening the very poverty they set out to cure. So with the doubtful exception of the minister of Govan, we find amongst the clergy nothing but antipathy to the combinations which dogged the footsteps of enterprise, and (as cited in Barrhead) sympathy for the employers who suffered from their attacks. Reform must not come from below for that might spell revolution. The people must "thole and suffer with resignation" until their troubles - insofar as they were remediable - were overcome by their own exertions or mitigated by the wisdom of a paternal government and by the self adjustment of the laws of economics.

Thus, the minister of Airdrie furnishes this example of the typically negative attitude to trade unions. To him they are striving in vain against the inexorable laws of economics as laid down by Adam Smith:

"The frequent associations and combinations which prevail here and are connected with similar combinations in different parts of the country, to raise the price of labour are very hurtful. They interrupt trade and attempt what is impracticable, as the price of all labour must be regulated by the demand. They keep trades people in a constant state of agitation and make them spend much of their time and money in attending their frequent meetings. These combinations prevail most amongst the colliers and weavers." (1)

A statement from the minister of Lanark on the miserable condition of weavers seems to bear within it a moral on the futility of strikes: "Another extensive branch of manufacture in the parish is weaving, in which 873 persons are engaged; 702 in the town and 171 in the country. This trade is at the very lowest ebb, and scarcely yields the means of support to those who are employed in it. There are a few weavers who, being in the prime of life, and endowed with superior strength and skill, can gain 8s. a week; but to do this they must

(1) N.S.A. VI 249.

sit from fourteen to sixteen hours a day, and the exertion soon ruins the health of the most robust. The common wages scarcely average 6s. per week, from which a drawback must be made of 1s.3d; 10d for loom rent, 3d for light, and 2d for carriage of the web. Men advanced in life, dispirited by the remembrance of better times, may make about 3s.6d. The only addition to this miserable pittance is what their wives can earn by winding the waft upon pirns, and which varies from 6d. to 1s.3d per week.

When three or four in one family are employed and the joint gains are under the management of a thrifty wife, they are able to make a tolerable shift. But nothing can exceed the misery of those who have themselves and a family to support by single handed industry. The misery they have suffered has had the unhappy, but too common effect of plunging some of them into careless and dissipated habits; but the majority are well behaved and intellegent men, and bear their hardships with commendable patience. The following fact will illustrate the melancholy depression of this branch of industry. On Martinmas fair day 1812, a general strike took place, and continued for nine weeks, because a

certain description of work, 1200 polcuts fell from 8d to 6d per yard. For the last three years, the same description of work has been, upon an average $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. Accustomed at the former period to better days, the weaver believed that 6d. was too low a rate to afford him a livelihood, and it is only because it came upon him gradually, that they have been able to survive the present depression. Forced by the pressure of immediate want, they are accustomed to put their children of both sexes upon the loom at the early age of nine or twelve, by which means their numbers are continually augmenting and the evil is increased." (1)

The strike of weavers - even the great strike of 1812 - had proved unavailing to retard the decline of their fortunes. It is interesting, therefore, to note the occasional success of restrictive practices. There were instances of unions prevailing against certain attempts to lower production costs: "On the subject of tables of prices, as affecting the progress of manufactures, we have received the following statement from a most respectable manufacturer in town, who carries on business to a very

(1) N.S.A. VI 22.

great extent. "These (minimum tables for weaving) I think are prejudicial to the introduction of anything new.

If a manufacturer has projected something which is entirely different from common, the case is immediately taken up by the Weavers Association, and a price fixed on before the maker can know whether it is to succeed or not. A very respectable manufacturer told me that last year he thought of trying something which he considered entirely new; but rather than encounter the vexation and turmoil of the weavers Association, he abandoned his project".⁽¹⁾

Devotion to the free market in trade and wages is prominent in the Glasgow Account. Though a combine to control the price of coal had been formed in 1790 by the coalmasters round Glasgow and had succeeded for a year or two,⁽²⁾ it is held to be beyond the range of possibility to control the wages of hand loom weavers. This may have been true where export trade was concerned, yet the attempt to do so is not sympathetically described and the subsequent note on Union activities betrays considerable

(1) N.S.A. VII (Paisley) 269.

(2) Hamilton Op.Cit. 195.

asperity. When labour and capital meet in conflict the clergy take their stand with capital and in the following quotation those arises that very unhappy generalisation, "the higher paid, the less content":

"Many attempts have been made by the hand-loom weavers to have their prices regulated by Act of Parliament, or Board of Trade; and in this they have occasionally been aided by some well meaning men of rank and influence, but as might have been expected without the least success. For why fix the wages or prices of the hand-loom weavers, whilst those of the mason, joiner, farm servant, etc. are left to be adjusted by the constantly operating natural causes springing from and demand supply? If the prices of weaving were fixed, whenever a period of stagnation arrived, the manufacturers would rather get weavers to do their work at lower prices clandestinely, or they would cease to manufacture at all, thereby throwing a great proportion of the weavers completely idle. Besides, the hand weavers had a long period of high wages, averaging far above the rates paid for labour in other more laborious and skilful professions. This arose from the rapid extension of their trade; and now, in its decline,

they must be contented with the lower rate of wages, until their superabundant labour is absorbed by other trades in a state of advancement. This process has been going on within the last few years, and the wages of hand loom labour are now advancing. During the rise of hand-loom weaving in the West of Scotland, the high wages and constant excitement applied by rival manufacturers and their agents led to much dissipation, especially among the younger men, and the bulk of the class became prone to dissolute habits; Still, however, many well educated, intelligent and decent men were to be found amongst them; now the bulk of the class are sober frugal intelligent men which shows that high wages neither lead to decency nor intelligence, - the sure basis of happiness.

It has invariably happened in this manufacturing community, that, when any class of operatives obtained for a time wages much above the other classes, they have in general become dissipated, and they are found living in more miserable ill-furnished dwellings than those having the very lowest rates of wages. Various expedients have from time to time been resorted to by several of the trades,

with a view to raise or maintain their wages, such as long apprenticeships, heavy fees, and the like, and of late, trades unions have been much in vogue, many of them having rules and practices surpassing the closest corporations, and outvieing the fiercest tyranny of the darkest ages; and it is strange that although these unions have in most of the trades been successively overthrown, still new unions urge the hopeless combat.

It bespeaks deplorable ignorance in the mass of the operatives who have so allowed themselves to be led by a few designing and selfish knaves; and submit to be urged by the violent wrong-headed fools of their order, - a class to be found in all communities. That the schoolmaster has been successfully abroad, there can be no doubt; and that the working classes are becoming more intelligent, every good man must observe with delight; but they are as yet in the transition state, at the point when a little learning is a dangerous thing. "They are like raw recruits with good weapons in their hands, more likely to wound their neighbours, or themselves, than to make a successful assault upon the enemy. Before they can be called intelligent,

or find themselves truly powerful, they must dip deeper into the pure science of morals, economy and politics, which they can only accomplish by reading less of the base and selfish ravings of a particular description of the periodical press; and more of those solid works which calmly, deliberately and honestly, treat of the great principles of human nature, and the essential conventional laws of human society. (1)

The success of the self-acting ~~male~~ ^{mule} in replacing made by female labour, is also remarked with approval in the Glasgow Account. As in Barrhead the men have "annoyed" their employers by forming a union and the self-acting ~~mule~~ has been the employers' answer to their "vexatious interferences and restrictions": "The wages of that class of workmen (cotton spinners) have been maintained at a higher range than in the generality of the manufacturing employments. This high rate of wages has led to the contrivance of many expedients to lessen the cost of production in this process of the manufacture. About the year 1795, Mr. Archibald Buchanan of Catrine, now one of the oldest practical spinners in Great Britain,

(1) N.S.A. VI 154.

and one of the earliest pupils of Arkwright, became connected with Messrs. James Finlay and Company, of Glasgow, and engaged in refitting their works at Ballindalloch in Stirlingshire. Having constructed very light mule jennies, he dispensed altogether with the employment of men as spinners, and trained young women to the work. These he found more easily directed than the men, more steady in attendance their work, and more cleanly and tidy in the keeping of their machines, and contented with much smaller wages. That work has ever since been wrought by women, and they have always been remarkable for their stout healthy appearance, as well as for good looks, and extreme neatness of dress." (1)

Whether there was a actual connection between high wages and discontent among the industrial workers we may take leave to doubt and what may be an unfortunate prejudice appears again in the report of Barrhead. The Rev. Alexander Fleming D.D.-to whose parish we have so frequently returned as the most fruitful of all for a study of economic development and ministerial outlook - knows that all true reform begins in the heart. He realises equally that the cotton industry requires

(1) N.S.A. VI, 143.

radical change but he has a rooted suspicion of the manifestations of this same realisation in the minds of the workers. The politics of the left have already become a substitute for religion and who will say how much of this was due to the identification of religion with the politics of the right?

There is certainly prejudice here and little attempt at understanding:

"A great number of the operatives have from 16s. to £1. and from £1 to £1.10s; and some from £1.10s to £1.15s. and £2 p r week. Yet true it is, though strange, that those who have only from 16s. to £1 are more independent, and infinitely more comfortable in their clothing, furniture and supply of the table, than those who have from £1.10s to £2 aye £2.10s a week. The one class is generally frugal, sober, and contented with their situation and circumstances. The other is dissipated prodigal, literally wretched and poor; ill fed and ill clad, discontented with their condition, and with everything and everbody around them. Those of the one class give themselves to the duties of religion, the other to politics.

The latter would reform everything, yet refuse to reform, themselves. Amongst a people given to politics, the moral and religious character is lost. The one absorbs the other, and the magnitude of eternity is lost in the littleness of time. The squabbles of factions are preferred to the peace of God, and the party howlings of this world's policy to the songs of Zion".⁽¹⁾

Much more objective is the minister of Hamilton's account of demonstrations arising, not from from the discontent of the better paid, but from the distress of weavers scarcely able to obtain the necessities of life. While acknowledging this, he expresses the fear that unions may have the actual effect of still further depressing the condition of the trade itself .

"The imitation cotton cambric trade, which in 1792 had reached its maximum, has for many years been on the decline; and it is to be feared that the formal combinations among the weavers may in time cause the manufacturers either to invent new machinery, or to seek out some other channel for their work. While I now write (1835) about 300 weavers are parading the streets with a

(1) N.S.A. VII 332.

web which had been given out by a house in town below the "table of prices", which they prescribed to the manufacturers. At the same time, the weaving is paid at a rate which cannot procure for the workman the ordinary comforts or even the necessities of life". (1)

Until the repeal of the Anti Combination Laws in 1825, unions had for twenty five years maintained a clandestine, existence. The laws seemed to some to frustrate their own intention by giving the attractiveness of the illegal to organisations destined to die a natural death in their impossible struggle with the laws of economics. This attitude can be found in the minister of Greenocks praise of the savings bank system as the best weapon in the hands of the workers. If the field Marshall's baton in every privates kit, is the reduction to absurdity of his argument - there were many living at that time who had risen from the ranks and made as spectucalor a change in their fortunes; and many more who by provident habits had obtained a better competence than had been previously known in Scotland. The idea, however that unions would disappear of themselves may have been an instance of wishful thinking.

(1) N.S.A. VI 294.

It was certainly a profound misreading of the signs of the times:

"It can scarcely be doubted that, with growing habit of industry and temperance, and a more general acquaintance with the nature and advantages of the Provident Bank system, the number of the depositors may be greatly augmented. Next to the diffusion of pure religion and sound moral principle there cannot be conceived a better or more powerful check to the growing pauperism of Scotland, or a more powerful instrument of promoting the personal and domestic happiness of the poorer classes, and, we may add, of these also who profit by their industry. He must be a weak minded alarmist and little acquainted with human nature, who imagines that the accumulation of £50 or £100 in a provident bank by a working man will induce him to strike for a rise of wages. We appeal to the working man himself, when we say that it is felt to have the very opposite effect.

It places him in a position in which since the repeal of the Combination Laws, he ought to stand with reference to his employer. If the employer knows, and there is no reason for keeping it secret from him, that his workmen have their tens, and twenties, and fifties in the Provident Bank, he knows that, however strongly inclined, he dare not reduce their wages below the true market price of labour. On the other hand, a workman in his sound mind, with money in the Provident Bank, will not strike in order to obtain more than that price, with the certainty of exhausting in a few weeks or months all the little wealth which he has acquired. In point of fact, the strikers or at least the originators of strikes, are, perhaps, without any exceptions, the reckless and improvident, - men who have nothing to lose, and who will not think: the sober and industrious are seldom or never engaged in these combinations. The cruel and oppressive system of trades' unions is, it is believed, approaching its dissolution; and the sooner it is dissolved, the better for the workmen and their families. Let the Provident Bank be more generally resorted to, and it will do far more for the industrious mechanic than trades' unions have ever been able to effect, with this immense advantage, that the mechanic

in his struggle with his employer, will not have the pain of looking on the pale and emaciated faces of his wife and children crying to him for bread, whilst he has none to give them." (1)

The actual working of a strike and its results in poverty and dismissals, is described by the minister of Sorn. The famous cotton works in his parish, employing nearly a thousand, with an annual wage bill of £27,000 have been already noticed for the commendation given them in providing a Schoolmaster for their young employees. In such a context the demand for increased wages, backed by a strike, is treated by the minister as an attempt to sabotage the welfare of the whole community. The company has sometimes paid wages during depression when other works would have stopped and its generosity in this respect is only paralleled by its reinstatement after the strike of everyone except the leaders:

"When a stagnation of trade occurs, and other works of a similar description suspend their operations wholly, or in part, the Catrine Company carry on their operations without intermission, and keep their workers in full employment. A goodly feeling has in consequence, with but little interruption,

(1) N.S.A. VII: 480.

subsisted between the employed and their employers in the Catrine works. An attempt, it is true, was made about two years ago to destroy this goodly feeling by the formation of a union among the workers, and by the demand for an increase of wages. This attempt, as generally happens in such cases, failed, - much distress ensued, and the greater number of those who had been seduced from an establishment, where they had uniformly been treated with all the kindness and consideration consistent with its proper management, returned after the lapse of a few months, and solicited admission to their former situations. Except in the cases of those who took a leading part in this union, the applications of all were listened to, and the same harmony and good feeling which formerly prevailed in this establishment seem again to prevail, and, it is hoped, will long continue. The works at Catrine, as well as the workers, have uniformly excited the admiration of strangers; and from the books of the General Friendly Society at Catrine, with which many of the persons employed at the Catrine works are connected, it is evident there is less sickness among the people employed at the works than among any other description of workmen in the village. The success of the establishment, and the comfortable circumstances of those

employed at it, are mainly owing to the able and judicious management of Archibald Buchanan, Esq., the resident partner of Messrs James Finlay and Company, who has managed the works at Catrine almost from the time they passed into the hands of the present proprietors.⁽¹⁾

In a note which bears none of the bitterness of some of the previous quotations, the Rev. Matthew Leishman of Govan implies the success of unions in keeping up the wages of spinners, but thinks that they operate unfairly because these higher wages may be at the expense of other trades unable to form unions or to exert an equal pressure. The modern problem of pressure groups within a democracy has already shown itself. It demonstrates that the law of supply and demand does not operate so conclusively as the current economic theories had assumed. The organised group sometimes fixed its own price. The chambers of commerce (which the clergy approved) had no doubt, like the coal master's round Glasgow in the seventeen nineties, begun to fix prices. And the bargaining power of the organised worker is beginning to make itself felt. Unfortunately the poor weaver has been less successful in his organisation.

(1) N.S.A. V.: 141.

"For many years, it is too well known the hand-loom weaver=has received for his labour very inadequate remuneration. His mind has been depressed by this. While the smith, the carpenter, the shoe-maker, the mason, and the power-loom weaver, have been earning from 14s to 25s a week, the unfortunate hand-loom weaver has often been obliged to content himself with earnings ranging from 5s to 8s. Wiser heads than his cannot comprehend how, in a well regulated commonwealth, such an unequal state of things should be found to exist. When a stagnation of trade takes place, the effect is immediately felt by the hand loom weaver whose earnings are still further reduced, while the cotton-spinner, who is engaged in a branch of the same manufacture continues to be paid according to a rate, little if anything below the usual scale of prices. If this be the result of the establishment of trades' unions, and if on Account of the poverty of the hand-loom weaver, or for some other cause, the formation of a trades' union in his case has been found impracticable, it is not surprising that he should wish the interference of the Legislature in his behalf, in one shape or another, that the interests of one class in the community may not be sacrificed to those of another."(1)

(1) N.S.A. VI: 694.

Neither the economic nor the political aspirations of the workers in their attempts to exert an influence, received any degree of sympathy from the clergy-for they were symptoms of a revolt against the established order. However much the privations of classes like the weavers appealed to their compassion, they believed that it was only a matter of time before the balance of trade would return in their favour. Any political agitation to remedy such "an unequal state of things" conjured up before their eyes the unhappy precedent of France. The ills of the worker they admitted to be many, but their cure was held to lie in other hands than his.

We turn now from the trade unions to the more specifically political movements like Chartism and Radicalism and we find that antipathy is uniform to all ⁽¹⁾ movements of the left. To hold political opinions is for a working man, to be in opposition to the powers that be. It poisons his mind; as a luxury excessively indulged it impoverishes his family.

"The people are generally contented with their situation but it is observed, that when a poor man becomes a politician, he is apt to become discontented. So much time is spent on reading and debating, that work is neglected,

(1) PATRICK BREWSTER of PAISLEY ABBEY, the only noteworthy exception, was summoned to appear at Presbytery & Assembly for his opinions.

poverty and wretchedness ensue."(1)

The same sentiment is expressed at length by the minister of Kilbirnie: "It cannot be doubted that, upon the whole, the people of this parish enjoy as many of the comforts and advantages of society as any similarly constituted community in the kingdom. Many of them are not wholly dependent on their employments; while the resources of the poor but industrious artisans are not so soon exhausted in small as in large manufacturing towns. The inhabitants, too, seem in general speaking, contented enough with their circumstances, though a few of them have of late in becoming politicians, become dissatisfied not only with their own social position, but, strange to say, with nearly all the institutions of their country. These constitute, however, but an insignificant fraction of the population, the great body of which is warmly attached to the existing order in church and state. "(2)

Almost alone amongst intellectuals this dissatisfaction found expression in Robert Owen. He is almost completely ignored by the statistical accounts but there is evidence enough to show a great clerical hostility to this genius who did not fit into any of the existing patterns. By his emphasis upon the effects

(1) N.S.A. IX (Leslie) 118.

(2) N.S.A. V. 710.

of environment on character, by his founding of co-operative societies and his pursuit of Factory legislation he takes his place amongst the fathers of the welfare state and under his auspices the name socialism came into being in 1835. Since, however, *Mumford* accuses him of "bumptiousness, arrogance and conceit"⁽¹⁾ and Kirkup of "autocratic spirit"⁽²⁾ (and his projects came as a complete novelty to the people of his day) he could scarcely be expected to commend himself to the Church. We have seen a single disparaging reference to him from the minister of Lanark.⁽³⁾ In the parish of Bothwell, the scene of one of his later experiments, the minister devotes three pages to disparagement. Yet the whole scheme could be summed up as visionary and the minister's criticism is not illfounded:

"Owen's experiment:- as connected with the civil history of this parish it may be proper to notice, that, in the year 1825, an establishment was formed at Orbiston, near Bellshill, on the principles of the co-operative system, or Robert Owen's "new view of Society." The avowed object of the founders was to furnish in this institution a model for others of a similar nature throughout the country, which, as they boasted, "were to remoralize the lower orders, to

(1) *Mumford* op. cit. 248

(2) Kirkup op. cit. 8.

(3) Page 144

reduce the poor-rates, gradually to abolish pauperism, with all its degrading consequences, and to relieve the country from its (present) distress". The first step towards the attainment of these most desirable objects was the erection of a building in the form of a parallelogram - a form essential to the new system..... Scarcely a fourth part of the parallelogram was finished, at an expense greatly exceeding the original calculation. It consisted of a central building with a spacious wing, of freestone, four storeys high, and garrets. Each flat was bisected by a passage running from one end to the other; on either side of the passage there were eighteen rooms of comfortable dimensions.

Within this structure a population amounting at one time to 60 adults, and 120 children, was collected from all parts of Scotland, England, and Ireland, certainly not the elite of their respective countries, and the system was commenced. The inmates assembled to their meals in a public room, which was fitted up for the purpose, but they did not all fare alike. There were four different tables, and four different rates of expense.

The principles professed by the managers of the concern, and the regulations by which they attempted to carry the new system into effect, it would not be easy to explain,

and it could serve no good purpose. There was a small publication distributed among the members, entitled "The Religious Creed of the New System, with an Explanatory Catechism, and an Appeal", etc. The author, Abram Combe, who was also overseer or principal manager of the establishment, says in his preface. "The following pages contain a candid statement of the religious impressions which an attentive perusal of his, (Mr. Owen's) writings has made upon my mind." From this statement, we learn that Mr. Combe received what he calls his religious impressions" from an attentive perusal of Mr. Owen's writings, and they are certainly worthy of such an origin. The chief merit of the book consists in its being for the most part utterly unintelligible. So far as a notion can be formed of its contents, it may be justly characterised as a farrago of crudities, absurdities, unfounded and infidel assertions, that can impose on no men of ordinary understanding, and that could have been derived only from writings such as Mr. Owen's.....

The experiment was made at New Orbiston, and the results was the very reverse of all Mr. Combe's anticipations. It was worse than useless to those who enrolled

themselves members, and embraced the principles of the institution; and it terminated, as was easily foreseen by all but Mr. Owen and the dupes of his delusion in a total failure.....

The name given to the establishment by the founders was New Orbiston. It was universally known throughout the country by the more appropriate appellation of Babylon."⁽¹⁾

Thus the founder of Socialism is dismissed. This minister of Bothwell probably represented the whole clerical judgment on his views and experiments. But Owen represented only one strain of the politics of the left. Indeed he was indifferent to politics as such - at variance with Chartists and Radicals and uninterested in the Reform of Parliament. Chartists and Radicals can so readily be confused that the Statistical Accounts draw no clear distinction between them. They had different priorities which made them uncertain allies. Chartists believed first of all in reforming the constitution so that government by the people might look after the interests of the people; Radicalism was more middle class, less insistent on Reform after 1832, stressing the freedom of the individual and finding for years its chief

(1) N.S.A. VI: 780.

aim in the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Under whatever form popular political feelings appeared, ministers disliked their demonstrations:

"The first day of April 1819 was on a Sunday. Associations for reform had, on that and the preceding years, been frequent in England, Ireland and Scotland. A regular system was formed, and an active correspondence carried on amongst them all. The wildest theories about liberty and equality were broached and promulgated, with ardour and unwearied diligence. The different Associations had their times and places of meeting regularly fixed. In these the Spencean doctrines found willing, and resolute advocates. This Spencean plan was to divide the whole lands in the nation among the people; perfect equality in the division being the rule of distribution, so that none should have more than another. In the meantime, rumours of a general rising of the people throughout the empire to obtain this end, were circulated with great industry by the radical reformers. Whether the directors of the movement intended only a hoax according to the custom of foolery on this day of the year, is best known to himself; but this is certain, that during

the night, or early on the Sunday morning, a flaming proclamation, announcing the rising, was placarded upon all the church doors in town and country, stating that the insurrection was to begin that day in London, and in the chief towns of England and Ireland, and calling upon the Reformers here to be ready to join them, threatening instant death to all who opposed them.

On that Sunday morning, the writer of this could not understand what attraction was about the church gate. He saw the chief of reform in motion, hastening to the gate, and looking mighty big when turning away from it. Understanding that the cause of this excitement was the proclamation referred to, the minister preached a sermon from the following text: "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing meekness unto all men." This produced the happiest consequences in the parish. Except by the musical band, and a few wrong-headed men like themselves, the operatives resolved to attend their work as usual. To their honour and credit be it told, they did so; and it was very remarkable,

that whilst the whole works of the same kind in Lanarkshire, Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire and Ayrshire stood still that week, not one of all the twenty-two large public works stood idle for a moment in Neilston parish. The events of that week will be long remembered by many. The whole of the West of Scotland was in agitation and alarm, save Neilston, which was comparatively quiet, peaceable and orderly.

This effect we mention with exultation, as an instance of the influence of the pulpit, and the necessity of having not only an active and gospel ministry, but also an Established Church sufficiently large to admit a considerable number of the parishioners for hearing during service."⁽¹⁾

The disturbances of 1819 & 20 were by far the most formidable of any in the lifetime of the Statisticians. They were the Scottish equivalent to the "Manchester Massacre" at Peterloo. They caught the imagination of the clergy and a far less naive description of them will be noted - at the close of this chapter - coming to us from Strathaven where they claimed a martyr.

Unlike the clergy, Carlyle took an objective view of this whole movement. "It was the bitter discontent grown

(1) N.S.A. VII: 324.

fierce and mad, the wrong condition therefore or the wrong disposition of the working classes in England"⁽¹⁾ If, as the clergy suggest, it found many of its leaders among the more irresponsible elements in the population, the wrong disposition of many workers had nevertheless good grounds in the wrong condition in which they were placed. The minister of Govan already quoted was mystified how those things should exist in a well regulated commonwealth. He thought the weavers had a good case for government intervention. He had, however, no taste for working class movements and records with apparent satisfaction, that, "a charist agitator, who met with no countenance in this village, lately reported to his convention, that "Govan was no go."⁽¹⁾ So, in general, the clergy failed to see the justice of much of the discontent and condemned the attempts to give it political impression. There is not a single favourable reference to the political movements of the left. In the matter of Chartism as of trades unionism there is no disposition to vindicate but only to blame.

Chartist literature comes under the ban of the minister of Denny. What was as much an effect and expression

(1) Carlyle op. cit. 110.

(1) N.S.A. VII: 694.

of discontent is treated as a cause. "The people generally enjoy in a good degree the comforts of society, and are contented with their situation. Unprincipled newspapers, are the chief cause of any discontent that exists. Their general character, however, is good. They are rather what may be called a church-going population. There are sometimes, but not often, prosecutions for poaching. Smuggling is annihilated. Would that drunkenness were so also!" Then in a footnote he explains the source of the offending pamphlets: "The public morals and peace are at this time (1841) both suffering from what is called Chartism. The principles of Chartists, as exhibited here, are infidel and anarchical. Few, happily, countenance them".⁽¹⁾

This opposition to Chartism may have found less scope because the movement was so ill organised, and its outbreaks were but casual and sporadic. But opposition to its earliest forms had become venomous in the person of an unscrupulous cleric, the Rev. ^{James} ~~Thomas~~ Lapslie of Campsie. He took a leading part in prosecuting Thomas Muir, the great popular hero.

It is refreshing therefore to think that his

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 125.

successor dissociates himself from this excess of political zeal; nothing but ill had come from his passing beyond the accept role of the minister: "The doctrines of the French Revolution were diffused to a great extent in Campsie, chiefly through means of Mr. Muir, advocate, who was afterwards tried and banished for sedition, and who had many relatives in this part of the country. Mr. Lapslie, then minister, thought it his duty to take steps in relation to this matter, which put him in an unfortunate position with respect to many of his parishioners, and led to many unpleasant consequences - among others, the burning of his manse; thus furnishing another proof how difficult it is for clergymen to step out of their own peculiar province, without seriously endangering their respectability and usefulness."⁽¹⁾

The Rev. ^{James}~~Thomas~~ Lapsie's own account of this episode is studiously vague. Thomas Muir was condemned to fourteen years' transportation "after a grossly unfair trial".⁽²⁾ For one deeply implicated in the case to describe Muir as an "unfortunate gentleman" is, to say the least, misleading.

His description of the different currents of popular

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 245.

(2) Mathieson op. cit. 10.

feeling and ideas,(though not without humour,) indicates a cleric at once astute and reactionary; but the mild contempt with which his successor has treated him, shows that he could never be taken as a representative cleric: "Although this parish has always been conspicuous for its attachment to its sovereign; whether of the Stewart family as in the last century, or of the Hanoverian family as in this present century; having raised a militia both in the years 1715 and 1745, - still I cannot help taking notice, in this Statistical Account of a remarkable fact relative to the conduct of some of the inhabitants of this district, which one would almost say contradicts the opinion of their loyalty. In the midst of the most profound peace, and, I may say, of the most unparalleled prosperity; all at once, as it were by enchantment, the operative part of this community conceived themselves to be groaning under the most abject slavery. They immediately associated themselves under the appellation of the Friends of the People..... Various causes co-operated to render Campsie a proper hot-bed for such folly. In the first place, a considerable degree of licentiousness had begun to prevail in this district, owing to high wages; and

as the influence of such wealth had been rather sudden, due subordination of rank was almost totally forgot. In the second place, a relief meeting, about ten years ago, being erected in this parish, which had drawn off a considerable number of people from the Establishment, and rendered them, in some measure, hostile to the powers that be; and I am doubtful but the spirit of innovation was encouraged in a certain degree by their public teachers, with a view to increase the adherents of their own tabernacle. In the third place, Mr. Muir, advocate, the unfortunate gentleman who was tried for sedition, having some connections, and being well acquainted in the place was naturally induced to try the power of his eloquence upon the inhabitants, and he succeeded.

If to these causes we add the particular circumstances of the character of young people at the different print-fields; men who have abundance of time in the evening to cabal together; men, too, from their profession, rather given to wandering, and fond of novelty, and somewhat naturally addicted to form associations against their masters' authority; we will not be surprized that Campsie should be so often mentioned as friendly to these Jacobean Societies."⁽¹⁾

(1) O.S.A. ~~XX~~: 380.

With his equal satisfaction in loyalty to either Stuarts or Hanoverians, Lapslie shows an attachment to the "higher powers" little better than sycophancy which, on the testimony of John Buchan and James Bridie, runs to extremes when found in the Scot. Scarcely any statement more redolent of social prejudice emanates from the Accounts. Yet two of its shrewdest judgments deserve to be noticed. When he says that the growth of political feeling after the outbreak of the French Revolution was "as if by enchantment" he confirms that the seeds of revolt fell on ground well prepared by many discontents: He suspects the Relief church of egalitarian principles - casting the only aspersion upon Presbyterian Dissent that we have found in the Accounts, but making a historical point attested elsewhere. Contacts there were between ministers of the Relief Church and the Friends of the People; and though they reached the Law Courts, they were not widespread, and came under their own discipline."⁽¹⁾

Great prosperity is alleged, in the previous quotation, amongst the workers affected by subservise ideas. But it was an insecure prosperity; by the time of the Second Account, discontent in sections of the working people had

(1) Mathieson op. cit. 88.

become chronic and ordinary. In an exceptionally detached account of it, the minister of Balfron wondered that the discontent was not greater considering the distresses to be endured. State intervention appealed to him as a possible cure:

"Nor can anyone who knows the circumstances of the weaver be astonished that there should be discontent at times among them. Our wonder is that there is so little, more especially when they have so little opportunity for moral and religious training. It is no easy matter, we are aware, to say what the Legislature should do. But the subject is well worthy the attention of philanthropists; and in the name of thousands of our suffering countrymen, we cannot help ~~feelings~~ wishing, that some remedy were speedily introduced to alleviate sufferings and privations, which we are satisfied have no parallel in our Christian land."⁽¹⁾

In this cry of the heart there lies an acute consciousness of social malaise. The discontent that is so often blamed is here, to say the least, condoned - furnishing a distinct exception to the general tone of comment and showing that it is impossible, (with complete accuracy) to

(1) N.S.A. VIII: 295.

classify the social leanings of the ministry. But when we come to consider poor relief we find this same minister attached to the old system so ill adapted to relieve the unemployed.

With its industrial and mercantile pre-eminence, its vulnerableness to recessions of trade, and its cosmopolitan population, Glasgow furnished the best breeding ground in Scotland for discontent and the spirit of revolt. As it might be expected, the pride in her technical progress shown by her statisticians is accompanied by a strong loyalty to the constitution. There is no sympathy for Radicalism. Its demonstrations during periods of depression are almost an affront to the efforts of public spirited citizens to mitigate the distress:

"The revolutionary principles of France had made such rapid progress in this country during 1793-4, that an Act of Parliament was passed, authorising his Majesty to accept the military services of such of his loyal subjects, as chose to enrol themselves as volunteers, for defence of our inestimable constitution. The necessary arrangements had no sooner been made, than a number of the citizens of Glasgow

offered their services to the Government, which were immediately accepted."(1)

Depressions of trade rather than French influence were the occasion of later disorders: "In the later end of 1816, and beginning of 1817, the stagnation of trade was such, that the working-classes in the city and suburbs could not find employment. The distress of the workers was so great, that it was found necessary to raise money for their relief by voluntary subscriptions, from a large sum raised, the committee distributed £9,563 among 23,130 persons."

"In 1819, the working-classes were again thrown into great distress from want of employment. The seeds of discontent which had been widely sown took deep root in this part of the country, and ended in what has been emphatically called RADICALISM. At this alarming crisis, when thousands of workers paraded the Streets, demanding employment or bread, upwards of 600 persons were almost instantly employed at spade work, or breaking stones for the roads. Exclusive of the exertions of the authorities, and individuals in the suburbs, the magistrates of Glasgow simultaneously employed upwards of 340 weavers at spade work in the green,

nearly the whole of whole of whom remained for upwards of four months under the direction of Dr. Cleland; and it is only justice to those individuals to say, that under his kind usage and vigilant superintendence, not one of them left work to attend political meetings in the Green, although thousands marched past them with radical ensigns, accompanied by well-dressed females carrying caps of liberty. The distress and dissatisfaction continued during the greater part of 1820, when large distributions of clothing, meal, and coals were given to such persons as could not find employment. The distress was such that 2040 heads of families were under the necessity of pawning 7380 articles, on which they received £739, 5s. 6d. On the 30th August of that year, James Wilson was hanged and beheaded for high treason."⁽¹⁾

That the Chartists had real grievances and deserved to be heard could scarcely be gathered from these unsympathetic accounts of their activities. To what extent the French Revolution retarded as well as advanced reform in other countries can be seen in the fear of insurrection and the attribution of irreligion to any who were drawn into the associations of the left. Since revolution never succeeded

(1) N.S.A. VI: 121.

amongst us we are inclined to think these fears exaggerated. As Carlyle so aptly puts it Chartism was a Chimera:

"Delirious Chartism will not have raged entirely to no purpose, as indeed no earthly thing does so, if it have forced all thinking men of the community to think of this vital matter, too apt to be overlooked otherwise. Is the condition of the working people wrong; so wrong that rational working men cannot, will not, and even should not rest quiet under it? A most grave case, complex beyond all others in the world; a case wherein Botany Bay, constabulary rural police, and such like will avail but little. Or is the discontent itself mad like the shape it took?"⁽¹⁾ This is a detached and objective view. Allowing that there were many grounds for discontent the clergy fall short of Carlyle in under-estimating its justice. It was not so unreasonable as they imagined. It was right to stand for law and order but they pondered too little the far more difficult problem how law itself might be altered and justice also maintained.

Thus the minister of Cumbernauld thinks that economic grievances are real but that their political expression is scarcely legitimate. After recounting the woes

(1) Carlyle op. cit. 111.

of the weavers he says: "The above, with other causes, some of a political nature, have produced unquestionably very great changes in the moral character and habits of the people, - not for the better, it is much to be feared; and has hindered them from prizing as they ought, and, therefore from giving to their children, that education which once was the pride and honour of the people of Scotland. The natural effect of this is, that though few are unable to read, yet they are allowed to grow up in comparative ignorance of religion and its duties; and hence may be dated the decline of morality, - disinclination to religion and to religious duties, - neglect and disregard of the Sabbath and of Sabbath institutions, - the increase of profanity and crime, and, of late years, the increasing magnitude of the criminal calendar. Notwithstanding of this, and though we have some turbulent spirits among us, - and it is to be regretted that this class seems upon the increase, - still the character of our population generally is quiet and orderly, in the midst of their many privations."

"The principal exception from this general character, consistent with my knowledge, is that of a few deluded men in the village of Condorat, who, in the year 1820, joined some disaffected characters from Glasgow, and accompanied them, upon the 6th April, 1820, to Bonnymuir, about three miles west of Falkirk, where engaging a party of the King's troops,

they were defeated and taken prisoners. Only one was a native of the parish, and was executed at Stirling for high treason; the others had their sentence commuted to transportation.⁽¹⁾"

This same battle of Bonnymuir is described dispassionately enough by the writer on Falkirk, Noone was killed but several were wounded and nineteen Radicals taken prisoner. Their armed might consist of five muskets, two pistols and one hundred round of ball cartridge; "The result showed the hopelessness of any attempt on the part of the Radicals to cope with regular troops, and the disturbances of that period speedily subsided."⁽²⁾

To omit nothing that reveals the prejudice of the clergy against the attempts to organise the new discontent here is a final illustration from the minister of Strathaven - perhaps the most venomous of them all. Fear of Sedition has given way to contempt. After glorying in the victory of the Covenanters over Claverhouse, and, figuratively speaking, building their tombs he proceeds to stone the prophets of economic freedom in his scornful treatment of their abortive rising:

(1) N.S.A. VIII 148

(2) N.S.A. VIII 8

"I grieve to be under the necessity of noticing a "rising" here of a very different description in 1819, - a rising in open rebellion against lawful authority, and intended against both the altar and throne. I refer to an attempt of a few deluded persons calling themselves "Radicals" who, with something like weapons in their hands, marched from this place towards Glasgow, under the command of a James Wilson, whose life was soon after forfeited to the outraged laws of his country. It does not appear that Wilson ever contemplated carrying matters so far as to become an open rebel against the laws of his country; but he had infused a spirit into his companions which he was unable to control. The rising was in the utmost degree contemptible, for it comprised no more than thirteen individuals, deluded by a false report that a general rebellion had taken place in Glasgow. It has been remarked that none of those who joined in the ludicrous crusade afterwards experienced anything like prosperity."(1)

The politics of the clergy especially on their negative side, have been thus exhaustively pursued; the majority of references to the movements of the left are here set forth and none which seemed unnecessarily censorious have

(1) N.S.A. VI: 305.

been omitted. On the analogy of Cromwell's portrait (and in relation the whole picture we have tried to paint) a disproportionate number of "warts" has been included. It would be possible to base upon them something like the following criticism.

Since the substance of Radical and Chartist demands has been granted and since trade unions from being suspected and despised have risen to be an essential mediating influence and, indeed, a centre of power in the modern state, it could be argued that the failure of churchmen to interpret the situation which produced them or to credit them with any justice in their aspirations was extreme narrowness of vision; and that it was not only a yielding to political expediency which would prove embarrassing to their successors but a failure to castigate the range of sins most stressed by the prophets. For instead of attacking the sins associated with wealth and power they concentrated on the sins of the oppressed. The covenanting revolt was literally against throne and altar too, so that the two revolts might have been linked for resemblance rather than contrast. Clerical attacks upon popular turmoil, at their most strident, are no more edifying

than Luther's tirade against the peasants.⁽¹⁾ John Galt dealt with a situation where industrial trouble was only incipient but thirty years later these hostile statements - roughly contemporary with Carlyle's pamphlet - show that their authors had not pondered deeply and clearly the new social problems nor reached out toward the solutions which society has seen fit to adopt. The Church of Scotland produced none so illustrious as Maurice or Kingsley in vindicating the popular cause. According to W.E. Gladstone it is a duty next to a man's religion to see that he is well governed. This they would not have conceded to the humbler orders of the people. The workman was in transition from serf to citizen and the ministry did nothing to speed him on his way.

true at its own level but it is also

Such criticism is ~~to a great extent~~ superficial; and we put it forward believing that ~~(whatever truth it contains)~~ it does not detract decisively from the broad achievement of the clergy. Their broad reputation depends no more upon this than that of Luther upon the Peasant's Revolt

(1) "Think nothing so venomous, pernicious and devilish as an insurgent". Quoted Lindsay op. cit. 337.

or Calvin upon Servetus. The movements which they condemned were at the time extreme, standing for strikes or revolution, and it is certain that the conditions amid which people lived were preferable to the miseries of revolution. Carlyle the "prophet" of his generation with his penetrating insight in diagnosing the social situation was no more fertile in solution of its problems. He had no monopoly in preaching hard work; his hero worship has had baleful examples.

What is far more significant, Coleridge whose dictum (heading this chapter) on treating persons as things, goes to the root of the whole matter, had much the same outlook as the clergy on public affairs: "I think the fate of the Reform Bill, in itself, of comparatively minor importance; the fate of the national church occupies my mind with greater intensity."⁽¹⁾

The clergy were but carrying out the role commended by L.P. Jacks after a lifetime of thought upon the matter: "Would that men everywhere would forsake their stupid worship of the Political Idol with its ritual of mischief making, and concentrate on the breeding, multiplication and nurture

(1) Coleridge op. cit. 159.

of Christians!"⁽¹⁾ It is too easily forgotten that the cynicism of Voltaire and the romanticism of Rousseau were as dangerous errors in their day as any that have since been promulgated. Any who had the remotest connection with them were bound to be suspect. These who regret that the church did not "get in on the ground floor" with the modern movement of the left, should reflect that this was occupied from the first by ~~others~~ with whom no compromise was possible. "It was Gods mercy to our age that our Jacobins were infidels and a scandal to all sober Christians. Had they been like the old Puritans, they would have trodden church and king to the dust - at least for a time."⁽²⁾

(1) Jacks op. cit. 188.

(2) Coleridge op. cit. 184.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

POVERTY.

"If you confine your beneficence to the relief of poverty you do nothing. Dry up, if possible, the springs of poverty, for every attempt to intercept the running stream has totally failed". Chalmers, quoted Mackinnon ^{ly} op. cit. 244. Summary: Praise for the old system of Poor Relief, Sir John Sinclair, Grey Graham, Lord Cockburn: its characteristics, voluntary, parochial, ecclesiastical, confined to impotent: factors rendering it outmoded: mobility of population, industrial depressions: Chalmers revives old system: further hindrances to its effectiveness, growth of freedom, clearances, immigration, growth of Dissent: the old system upheld by clergy in Old and New Accounts: description of new poverty: vol/puntary system unequal to the strain: increasing use of assessment: reform overdue: clerical interest in prevention of poverty, Savings Banks, Friendly Societies, crusade against intemperance, against pawnbroking: principles of their approach to poverty.

There is a wide consensus of opinion that during the 18th century the poor of Scotland were neither harshly

nor unwisely dealt with. In the first half of the century the general standard of living was so low that extremes of poverty were less apparent; a modest and rudimentary provision did not seem inadequate. Even at the end of the first quarter of the following century Sir John Sinclair could say, "on the whole the poor in Scotland are in general sufficiently though not luxuriously provided for under the control of a pure system of administration and at moderate expense." (1)

Contrasting the situation with that in England, where every fifth man and woman was dependent more or less on compulsory parochial support, H. Grey Graham adds this eulogy to the Scottish system: "When we turn to Scotland we find that to meet the problem of poverty there was no anxiety, far less despair. And yet wages were half what were earned in England; the soil was barren; wretched agriculture was wasting the land and starving the people; trade was almost non-existent; there was chronic scarcity of money amongst the higher classes, and constant scarcity, and often dearth of food or "vivers", among the peasantry.

(1) Ferguson op. cit. 187.

The problem of poverty was general rather than particular; envy between the different grades of society was at a minimum. "The relief of the poor was never an anxiety to the people nor a felt burden on the country."⁽¹⁾

As late as 1840 though some parishes had grown beyond recognition and the Disruption was to make reform inevitable, Lord Cockburn has a lingering regard for a system that had served Scotland well: "The question is whether we shall continue to adhere to our ancient and often praised poor system or shall at once abandon it for poor rates, workhouses, overseers, relief as a matter of right to the unemployed and the able bodied, and all the other peculiarities that have hitherto been generally condemned in England. An odd question for Scotland to tolerate, but so it is."⁽²⁾

This ancient and oft praised system was almost wholly voluntary. Throughout the 18th century, though there were numerous quaint increments like church fines and payments for the use of mort-clothes, and picturesque local additions like the licensing of beggars with badges, its foundation

(1) Graham op. cit. 232.

(2) Cockburn op. cit. 386.

had been the Kirk plate. In 1800 the power of assessment vested locally in the magistrates or (in landward parishes) in the heritors and Kirk Session had only been exercised in 93 (1) of the 878 parishes into which the country was divided. It was a simple and primitive manner to provide for the poor, completely parochial, and having the advantage of much personal superintendence. The poor were in the first instance persons, and very often personalities.

John Galt's rural parish reflects no grievous situation. His poor are neither squalid nor pathetic because they belong to a community so integrated as to bear within itself almost a family relationship.

Besides being voluntary it was also an ecclesiastical system; the working of it was commonly entrusted to the minister and Kirk Session. At the beginning of the 18th century a heteronomous Christianity was still in being. As late as 1711 the civic authorities compelled church attendance;⁽²⁾ and into Victorian times the church carried out many functions since arrogated to the state. In 1840 both education and poor law were mainly under the aegis of the church.

(1) Burns op. cit. 96.

(2) N.S.A. II: 182.

In short, the poor relief of Scotland had the character of being voluntary, ecclesiastical and parochial, and it was (legally) confined to the impotent. For the agrarian society in contrast to the industrial found less reason to make special provision for its able bodied poor. There was a certain justice in its assumption that in normal conditions, need in the physically strong implied either sloth or improvidence. Perhaps the system earned its praise because it depended for its working on so many virtues - upon sobriety, industry and patience no less than benevolence. Society functioned with a minimum of legal intervention.

The stability of medieval Society has been thought to reside in the fixity of its parts and that of modern society in its mobility.⁽¹⁾ A system so parochial was therefore ill-adapted to meet the new situation produced by industry. The clergy of growing towns soon began to complain about the influx of poor⁽²⁾ yet the new industries depended largely on the mobility of labour. Under the impact of depressions, too, the voluntary nature of the system failed to cope with the demands that were made upon it. When a town

(1) Toynbee op. cit. 77.

(2) N.S.A. XI: 53.

like Paisley depended mainly on one type of trade, the problem of its poor in time of depression could scarcely be met on a voluntary basis. Nor was any satisfactory solution possible under a system so local. Indeed, economic crisis in Paisley in the eighteen forties meant 12,000 people subsisting on relief funds, gathered from all over the British Isles. And the Irish, many of whom must have contributed to its prosperity in days of expansion, found themselves threatened with deportation, or cut off from all relief.⁽¹⁾

One of the contemporary criticisms of Chalmer's^{on} experiment in St. John's Parish, Glasgow, was that it revived parochialism where the population was so fluid as to make such division unrealistic.⁽²⁾ It also revived the voluntary principle though this was already being discarded and later generations have dismissed it as insufficient to cope with the needs of the displaced and unfortunate in a complex and mobile society. It was certainly a gallant attempt to preserve personal relationships in what Mumford calls "the insensate industrial town"⁽³⁾

(1) Handley: 155.

(2) Monypenny op. cit. 116.

(3) Mumford op. cit. 136.

-a spirited rearguard action on behalf of the Scotland that had been poor yet idyllic.

"There is a close connection between the growth of freedom and the growth of pauperism; it is scarcely too much to say that the latter is the price we pay for the former".⁽¹⁾

"When, therefore, the minister of Greenock speaks about "the growing pauperism of Scotland" ⁽²⁾(though the wealth of the country was increasing) he makes a shrewd observation on the change coming over the country. The freeing of miners from their servile status did not arise through any philanthropic motives but to attract fresh labour to the mines.⁽³⁾ It attracted no public interest at the time.⁽⁴⁾ Until 1775, the miner had been maintained and, as the minister of Alloa says, "superannuated"⁽⁵⁾ but with his freedom he was obliged to maintain himself when out of work. "With manumission the native lost the privilege of

(1) Taynbee op. cit. 76.

(2) N.S.A. VII: 480. (*Above 250*)

(3) Mackinnon op. cit. 18.

(4) Cockburn op. cit. 336.

(5) N.S.A. VIII: 33.

maintenance which he could claim from his Lord."⁽¹⁾ So in the developing industries a contractual relationship had replaced the feudal status of former times and in seasons of bad trade the worker paid a heavy price for this freedom.

Apart from these general considerations that the effect of industry was to make society more mobile, more concentrated and, in some respects, freer than it had been before, there were factors more particular to Scotland, dislocating its social life, and rendering its poor law outmoded.

The break up of the clan system in the Highlands together with the enclosures and the consolidation of farms throughout Scotland generally, was an immediate aggravation to the problem of the poor in Lowland towns. Perth, for example, had a poor roll mainly composed of displaced Highlanders. The minister has nothing good to say about the clearances that brought this about for the effects that he saw were ^{indeed} vexatious.

"The great proportion of those who are on the Perth pauper list are foreigners. They have come down from the

(1) Toynbee op. cit. 75.

Highlands of the county, driven from their cottages and pendicles and little farms, by the unpatriotic and illiberal system prosecuted by some proprietors, of letting out their estates to a few individuals. They come with the miserable capital of a few pounds, scraped together with much toil and industry, into the town, and generally at an advanced stage of life. There it is soon spent and they sink into pauperism."⁽¹⁾

Contributing also to the volume of poor in the industrial belt and to the inability of the old system to cope with it, was the continual influx of poor from Ireland. There was no Poor Law in Ireland till 1838, and though J.L. Handley ridicules the idea that the Irish deliberately came to Scotland to take advantage of its poor relief, it is reasonable to think that the mere existence of a poor law (as well as better wages) served to provide Scotland with an additional aura as a land of promise. Certainly the Irish added greatly to the numbers of the poor. Hondley's argument shows, incidentally, how insufficient in terms of money the Scottish system had become in 1834: "This accusation -

(1) N.S.A. X: 133.

which is repeated ad nauseam in the writings of the day - of immigrants digging themselves in stubbornly for three years in order to reap financial benefit at the end of that period argues an incredible combination of foresight and stupidity on their part. That immigrant casual labourers and poor persons of all kinds, existing from hand to mouth and unable by their very circumstances to take thought for the morrow, could be honestly credited by their critics with prevision to pay their way in a parish at all costs for three years so that they might relax at the end of that time is too naive for credence, especially as it was notorious that Irish immigrants with a legal settlement had to fight for their rights and, if successful, could look forward to no more substantial support than half-a-crown a month, unless they submitted to incarceration in the workhouse".⁽¹⁾

While the industrialists tactly accepted Ireland as an inexhaustible pool of labour, the clergy with their patriotism, their anti Romanist bias and their practical concern as administrators of relief, tended to see it as an enormous reservoir of poor. According to the minister of Ayr, the Irish not only augmented the numbers of the poor, they

(1) Handley op. cit. 137.

lowered the morale and reduced the spirit of independence among the natives. They made claims for relief competitive.

"The population is mainly indigenous with the exception of some families of Irish labourers of the poorer class, who have been induced to become resident here, as in most other towns in the west of Scotland, from no strong temptation as to remunerative employment, but because any change whatever from their miserable condition in their own country was likely to be a change for the better. Those of the natives, however, with whom they mingle in the same station, have little cause to thank them for settling down among them, not only as they keep down the price of labour by competition, and curtail the chances of employment, but because they have tended in no small degree to demoralize their character, and to undo the sturdy feelings of independence, for which Scotchmen, until of late, had been so much distinguished, by inducing them to become claimants and sharers alike with them in public charities, in which they think they have a better right to participate than strangers." (1)

Particular also to Scotland, with the problems of

(1) N.S.A. V: 45.

the Highlands and Ireland, in its effect on poor relief in the rising centres of population, was the growth of Dissent throughout the country. This is all the more significant because its largest outbreak, the Disruption, came like a death blow to the old system. In 1845 there came the new Poor Law. According to Grey Graham, Presbyterian dissent began to influence the poor rates about 1750. "By that time the loss of these sturdy Christians to the Kirk seriously affected the amount of church collections, and what made it more aggravating to the Kirk-Sessions was the fact that these dissenters themselves, when they became old, infirm, or sick had no hesitation whatever in demanding relief from those funds to which they and their co-religionists had never contributed, and which their absence from the Kirk had done much to reduce." There was also the growth of absentee landlordism and a tendency for lairds to become Episcopalians, so that in both cases their contributions were (officially) lost to the poor. "The tenants had to relieve the servants of the landlord, and according to the common saying in Scotland, it was the poor who maintained the poor".⁽¹⁾

(1) Graham op. cit. 256.

What then is the attitude of the clergy to a system which was becoming more and more unsatisfactory with the passage of time? It is a verdict so clearly given that it requires no elaborate citation. In this respect the Accounts were summarised almost as soon as they were written - the old Account by its Sponsor, Sir John Sinclair. "He reported that the opinion of the church at large on the subject of assessments as it emerged from the S.A. was greatly in favour of the primitive mode of providing for the poor by collections and voluntary subscriptions." (1)

This is not surprising in the seventeen nineties when only ten per cent of the parishes had required to supplement the voluntary system; but when all the factors making the old system inadequate had been at work for another forty years it is surprising to find the same unanimity in the New Account. In one of the pamphlets on the Poor Law produced in 1841 when reform was being canvassed the Rev. John Cook of Laurencekirk analyses them thus: "In the N.S.A. of Scotland wherever the subject is adverted to it is stated, that assessments make the poor lean more on the public assistance they can obtain, than on their own exertions, or the assistance of their friends, and also make the friends and neighbours of

(1) Ferguson op. cit. 187.

the poor less disposed to assist them privately; so that the poor do really require more parish aid and become themselves more clamorous for it. Thus, in Coldstream, it is said, "The nearer we approach to England, we invariably find the poor-rates increase, and the people louder in their demands for relief"... There is nowhere, as far as I have observed, an opinion of an opposite kind expressed in any part of the S.A., On the contrary the observation is generally introduced, that the reluctance which formerly prevailed to apply for, or even to receive parish aid, is now diminishing, and in many places fast disappearing."⁽¹⁾

As we have seen in the realm of politics and trade unions, so in the matter of poor relief the church was conservative. The old system appealed to them as excellent and one with which they would never part without great reluctance. It was admittedly working in many places under great difficulties but it bore upon it the seal of long attachment and of previous success. It was in fact patriarchal and to change it would mean secularisation and would deprive them of an important function.

The tendency of the Accounts is to stress the changing

(1) Cook op. cit. 24.

morale of the poor rather than the increased causes of poverty. Departing from the evidence he found in them, this ministerial pamphlet^aer goes on to admit that the conditions of the poor had changed as well as their feelings: "It is not, however to be denied, that the increase of the claims on the poor's funds arises not merely from altered feelings in the poor and in those who might assist them, but also in a great degree, from alteration in the actual circumstances of the poor and working classes of society....

The alterations in the condition of the poor and working classes are, indeed, in some measure, the necessary result of the progress of civilisation and improvement. The more artificial and civilised that society becomes, and the further removed from a state of nature, the higher are ideas of comfort raised, and the greater becomes, the number of persons who are so much below what is reckoned the lowest allowable degree of it, as to seem proper objects of charity, though many of them in reality may not be worse off than independent labourers were in a less advanced state of society. The advantages of the poorer classes are, however, very considerably encroached upon by the progress of social

wealth and numbers. When men are widely scattered over a country, and have not appropriated to themselves many of the bounties of nature, those who are poor have a far better opportunity of providing for their wants, than when they are closely hemmed in on every side, and can scarcely look on anything that another man does not call his own. This difference is felt in the contrast between the rural and urban parishes,⁽¹⁾

There could scarcely be found a better description of the change that came over the poor in early 19th century than this minister has provided. Yet he did not welcome reform of the law. He thought the strictures upon the old system of relief applied only to the great towns and to certain areas in the Highlands. To his mind the poor relief of the populous areas could be satisfactorily arranged if parishes were subdivided, new churches erected, totally endowed as to their ministries, and their collections devoted entirely to the poor. Assessments were to be a last resort, a kind of safeguard against failure; the old methods with some invigoration could yet be applied to the new situation.

(1) Cook op. cit. 27.

But about the situation itself he has no illusions; industry and progress have changed the status of the poor.

It may be questioned, therefore, whether the inability of the old system to meet the new needs was fully realised by the ministry even when it was visibly passing away. Chalmers exhibits amazement that his own experiment in the revival of the traditional methods was not copied but it was in fact an attempt to stem the tide of economic change. The growth and movement of population had loosened the ties of community and made a voluntary and personal treatment of the poor well nigh impossible: "It remains an article in our creed, proclaimed to successive students, for the guidance in their future parishes - that for the relief of general indigence, the charity of law ought in every instance to be displaced, to make room for the charity of principle and of spontaneous kindness."⁽¹⁾ This was a great ideal but how could it be applied where the large aggregations of people, fortuitously gathered by industry were making social relationships more and more impersonal? The Rev. George Lewis of Dundee describes the result: "The poor roll

(1) Chalmers op. cit. 430.

of Dundee only informs us of the poverty it relieves and tells us nothing of the poverty it leaves unrelieved and unmitigated."⁽¹⁾ This is clearly less than a poor law is intended to achieve.

The Statute Law of Scotland required the authorities to make provision for the "needful sustentation of all aged poor and impotent persons, to enable them to live unbeggared and to tax and stent the inhabitants when necessary, for this purpose."⁽²⁾ Until 1750 the latter power was scarcely exercised; the poor had depended on voluntary contributions but they had a definite claim on an indefinite supply and when a deficiency arose it could only be met by assessment. At first this was often a voluntary arrangement but whenever anyone refused to pay it became compulsory. This change was increasingly evident after 1800, the number of assessed parishes rising from 152 in 1817 to 236 in 1839.⁽³⁾ Throughout the industrial belt the voluntary system was being swallowed up in the compulsory and wherever compulsion was used, givings to the Kirk plate immediately declined. There were a few instances of reversion to the old

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(1) Lewis op. cit. 4.

(2) Alison op. cit. 1.

(3) Mackinnon op. cit. 241.

ways in country parishes but Chalmer's experiment was unique in its time in a populous area. "What has required was not the repression of the instincts of benevolence but their organisation."⁽¹⁾ The voluntary assessment may have represented organised benevolence but when it became compulsory it ceased to be benevolence. The clerical regret therefore was for a system actually superior in principle but growingly impossible to practice.

When the growing infrequency of contacts between rich and poor was inhibiting the charity of spontaneous kindness, the charity of law became inevitable if the poor were to be maintained with any adequacy, In 1841 one or two ministers came round to that view⁽¹⁾ but ministers on the whole feared the abuse that might be made of a too liberal system of relief more than they feared the hardships imposed by too meagre provision. They wished to retain the power to

(1) Toynbee: 74.

(2) We are constrained to give a flat denial to the averment, that the reciprocal duty of relief may be safely, and in all cases, left to the spontaneous movements of the human mind.

discriminate between the dissolute and deserving. In this they were influenced by the example of England where relief was so badly administered that "the whole character of the people was lowered by the admission that they had a right to relief independent of work."⁽¹⁾ Dr. Alison's proposals to approximate the two systems in point of expenditure would have raised Scotland's expenditure from £140,000 to £800,000 per annum. While Dr. Alison looked to England (and in fact the new Poor Law of 1845 borrowed much from that quarter) the Select Committee on English Poor Laws in 1817 looked to Scotland for its inspiration. It referred to "the admirable practise of Scotland... where the local management and maintenance of the poor has been best conducted."⁽²⁾ The clergy therefore were not alone in their esteem for a system which had served so long and had been for centuries well fitted to its purpose. That they did not fully appreciate that poverty had become a vaster problem and that the unemployed required some legal claim to assistance, denotes that for them the fear of sloth was a ~~dominating~~ principle. If a man would not work neither should he eat. But the circumstances

(1) Toynbee: 86.

(2) Monypenny: 15.

had increased where by sheer economic pressure some could not find work or could not evade want in such work as they found to do. The reform which they opposed was in fact overdue.

As well as their immediate concern for poor relief as its main voluntary agents, the clergy had an intense interest in destroying poverty at its roots. They were anxious to implant provident impulses in the hearts of the people, and to reduce the amount spent on drink which appeared to them a most frequent cause and concomitant of poverty. They aimed at the prevention of poverty and considering the dislocation to which a complex society is subject they were inclined to cherish exaggerated hopes with regard to its prevention. . Their encouragement of Friendly Societies and of Savings Banks, their unceasing hostility to pawnbroking and to the multiplication of licences were, however, great contributions to social progress. If on the Poor Law they were conservative, in this they were before their time.

The Rev. Henry Duncan of Ruthwell who introduced the Savings Bank to Scotland supplies the most celebrated instance of clerical intervention in the cause of stewardship. But he only represents the type of influence forever being

exercised by ministers as such. Where combinations of workers against their employers are resolutely condemned, combinations for purposes of mutual insurance - which had in them also the shape of things to come - are universally approved. Sometimes the Friendly Societies failed because their actuarial basis was amateurish and this was always regretted; sometimes ministers sponsored them; always they welcomed them as bulwarks against misfortune and tokens of a provident spirit. The Founder of the Savings Bank had also the Friendly Societies as his proteges and his quiet crusade against intemperance is typical of the preventive role assumed towards a poverty that would otherwise require to be relieved.

There can be no doubt that these lines of effort were well directed. In his *Dawn of Scottish Social Welfare*, Ferguson says, "as for spirits there is general agreement that their excessive consumption contributed largely to the squalor and poverty of the 19th century and was in turn aggravated by these factors."⁽¹⁾ Even in a rural parish like Ruthwell the minister felt the greatness of the evil: "In this parish the writer took much pains, and incurred considerable obloquy, in endeavouring to suppress unnecessary public-houses.

(1) Ferguson op. cit. 27.

Notwithstanding all his efforts however, there are still three licensed houses of this description within the parish where one would be enough." No doubt he found them a vexing obstacle to his Savings Bank. He exacted a pledge from his parishioners "to give only one service when they had the melancholy duty of presiding at a funeral."⁽¹⁾

In short, the nimbus which surrounds drinking in the pages of Jupiter Carlyle took a more threatening shape for those who faced the consequences of commercial production. Between 1832 and the present day, bread has increased three times in price but whisky, thirty two times. Glasgow had roughly the same number of licences for its 200,000 inhabitants as it now has for its million: "In Glasgow there is at least one place where spirits are retailed for every TWELVE FAMILIES.⁽²⁾!!!" And in Port Glasgow: "It is almost incredible what quantities of spirit and liquors, and especially of the worst species of whisky, are consumed in this town; and it is painful to add, but truth requires it, that not a little is consumed by women."⁽³⁾

When we consider that pawnbroking was a late arrival,

(1) N.S.A. IV: 242

(2) N.S.A. VI: 195

(3) N.S.A. VII: 557.

not appearing in Glasgow till 1809⁽¹⁾ and only establishing itself in the larger centres, it arouses remarkable scrutiny as another temptation to the poor to dissipate their resources. Regulations which protected the larger borrower but left the poorest at the mercy of the broker are brought to light in the Account of Paisley.⁽²⁾ Wherever the system appears its associations are sinister: "One great source of demoralisation in large towns has not yet found a place in Arbroath, viz. PAWNBROKING establishments; - although we regret to be under the necessity of stating, that in some low public houses, articles of wearing apparel, and even bedclothes, are taken as a pledge for payment of the liquor consumed."⁽³⁾

Thus in the matter of the liquor - traffic and of pawn-broking the church has accepted responsibility for the weak and the wayward. Unbridled individualism and the liberty of ruthlessness, though sometimes obscured in what would be considered more lawful occupations, are here seen to be crying out for redress. Here they are leaders of public opinion, anticipating the social policy which has since prevailed.

(1) N.S.A. VI: 195.

(2) N.S.A. VII: 191.

(3) N.S.A. XI: 87.

If therefore, they opposed the setting of poor relief on a wider and firmer foundation than the Kirk plate - in the fear that it would circumscribe benevolence and increase pauperism by reducing the most powerful motives to exertion - they showed undoubted concern for removable weakness in the daily lives of the poor. Two interesting slogans were current at the time: "Give character and comfort will follow", and its apparent opposite: "Give comfort and character will follow." They are tagged by the Rev. George Lewis, respectively, to Chalmers and to Dr. Alison, the champion of reform. Neither contains the whole truth. And it is certain that the clergy clung too exclusively to the first. Had they seen them, as Lewis did,⁽¹⁾ to be 2/ complimentary rather than mutually exclusive they would have yielded more readily to the demands of changing conditions. Between these slogans, however, they held at least to the more profoundly true, for even the impulse to give comfort to others can only spring from character.

(1) Lewis op. cit. 8.

CONCLUSION.

The conclusions emerging from this enquiry (mostly stated as they arose) may be recapitulated in the following terms. The clergy approved the coming of industry and eagerly accepted the new prosperity which the conquest of energy and the replacement of human by mechanical power was bringing to pass in town and country. They welcomed what appeared to be a new age of plenty, with its improved wages, and its higher standard of living - its better food, clothing and even housing, where new houses were being built. But they deplored the changing idiom and character of the industrial population; the vicissitudes to which the industrial worker was exposed; his intermittent wages and his poorer health; and the employment of women and especially of children for long hours in factory buildings in contrast to the previously seasonal and comparatively healthful outdoor occupations. They lamented the increased pauperism that was evident not only on the poor-rolls but in the straightened circumstances of the able-bodied unemployed who were

not in receipt of relief. They saw a growing social problem in the slums of the larger centres with their squalor and overcrowding and their numerous facilities for drinking. For housing may sometimes have kept pace with demand but never with need. They found the inhabitants of the down town areas and a large proportion of the industrial population, untouched by religion. They weighed all that was ominous against the economic impoverishment of the previous age and thought the balance on the whole was gain. 21

In so far as generalisation can be made, their political outlook was that of Tory Socialism. They supported measures for the amelioration of factory life, provided these come from above; but they had a rooted distrust and fear of all movements working from below. Agitation under all its different guises. — Friends of the people. Chartists, Radicals, Trade Unionists — was always a matter of suspicion. On the question of the Poor Law they reasserted the validity of traditional methods. Though Tory Socialism has its progressive as well as its conservative elements, the later ^t predominate. t/ It was undemocratic, and this is a serious defect for

the modern mind. Through their interest in the conditions amid which people lived and their informed criticism of much that was unwholesome and nefarious they helped to create the public opinion from which reforms arise. But in no way did they anticipate the mass democracy of the present day; that they were successful leaders of social progress was a distinction they would never have thought of claiming. The ethos and social arrangement of a more recent past were as congenial to them as the violence and penury of times more remote were repugnant. It was the age of Scott and they were romantics too, but they did not follow him all the way.

The deepest impression to be derived from the Statistical Accounts is that of a very poor country being transformed into a rich one. In the countryside the return on crops had risen within a generation from threefold to eightfold; in the towns the coming of industry signified a corresponding advance in wealth. Dunghills were being removed from the streets; everywhere there was expansion; the standard of living was improving. Ministers were confident and

optimistic[^] for the black spots of industry were widely ; scattered and only of magnitude in a small fraction of the nine hundred parishes. Yet the charge of complacency can never be sustained for they were appalled by many scandals in social and industrial life. Reform of the cotton industry and of the weavers status must be radical but not by Radicals.

Had they any particular remedies for the social dislocation of the Industrial Revolution and the miseries that attended its progress? To answer this we must ask what have been the main factors contributing to the great improvement that has since taken place in the Factory System? Surely they are technical progress and social legislation? In both these spheres the clergy made a considerable contribution. In the first of them, scarcely any section of society had been more active or had given more consistent encouragement to the planing for national wealth. In the second they supported the Factory Acts, but they supported them from an undemocratic standpoint and could scarcely be termed pioneers in a movement which was still rudimentary. If these, then, are the main remedies that have proved

efficacious, they do not differ greatly from what the clergy instinctively pursued.

Besides the remedy that lay to their hands in the preaching of the word, two main influences are traceable in their outlook, that of Adam Smith and Malthus. Both had their own specifics for the ills of society. The influence of Adam Smith is paramount, for along with all the cultured of their generation the clergy associated the great strides in productively, that they had seen, with the freeing of trade, They shared Smith's optimism that everyman pursuing his economic interest would unconsciously promote the public good; they accepted the law of supply and demand as something that could not be altered. Thus when the Combination Laws come under the fire of Chalmers (1) it is certain that he had no sympathy with trade unions, as such, but the Laws seemed at variance with the economic freedom in which he had come to believe. If the Savings Banks were primarily an outcome of the doctrine of stewardship, the man who invested in them was held to have advantage in the labour market - to have a reserve by which he

(1) Saunders, Op.Cit. 220.

could avoid that market in time of flood. Above all, the recessions of the various trades were to be borne with patience and resource till the law of supply and demand adjusted the situation. Thus exceedingly sanguine Accounts are given of Glasgow and Paisley where the vicissitudes of trade could be alarming, because advance had been so swift that the expectation of further advance had become a habit of mind.

e/
h/ The other main influence - for similarities are too common to be mere coincidence - is that of Malthus. The pressure of large families upon the resources of the poor, and of a rapidly increasing population upon the means of subsistence (mainly due to a falling death rate) was ^{sometimes} attributed to early and often improvident marriages. We have Chalmer's plea for prudent marriages; (1) due provision being made for marriage was a formula for improving the status of the worker⁽²⁾; by prudence and restraint, the smaller family would have the better chance of adequate provision from a food supply incapable of indefinite expansion. This is a truism on which the western world has acted, though not perhaps at

(1) Chalmers Op.Cit. 24.

(2) Page 176

the same moral level urged by Malthus and his Scottish compeers. To believe, as most of them did, that the granting of poor relief, without strong safeguards against abuse, could lead to nothing but the multiplication of the poor, was also Malthusian. The clergy held tenaciously to that position. They wished those ties of home, kindred and locality, flourishing greatly in the Scotland of the old economy, to be carried forward into the new. Under Sessional relief a means test was forever at work but it had the effect not of breaking up families but of their consolidation. In the magnitude and mobility of modern communities and their secularisation, the whole clerical system of poor relief has vanished but Malthusian principles have not vanished, for no society can afford to forget that it is better to prevent poverty by sobriety, application and prudence than to have much poverty to relieve.

Though Adam Smith and Malthus are formative influences upon the Scottish clergy, their calling was such as to make the first concern of the most earnest amongst them, nothing short of the Christian good of Scotland. This had both its spiritual and temporal

aspects. In the growing centres of population, church extension appealed to them as the most fundamental remedy that could be brought to bear. The population of Scotland at the time of Webster's analysis in 1755 could have been halved by a line drawn from Stirling to Dundee. (1) By 1835 the industrial belt had claimed an undue proportion. A national church had to face that situation if it was to justify its claim to supply ordinances with a measure of evenness to the whole population. The machinery available under the state connection for setting up new charges was cumbrous in the extreme-dissatisfaction with it being one of the contributory causes of the Disruption. Indeed the main answer of the church to the new situation lies in such appeals that of Chalmers for twenty churches for Glasgow where none had been built in the thirty years before 1815 though the population had nearly trebled in the time. (2) It lies in the plea of the Rev. Patrick MacFarlan, (3) of Greenock for new churches

(1) J. G. Kyd. The Scotsman 15/12/52

(2) Cambell Op.Cit. 177

(3) It is to irreligion, the result - we may say the necessary result, - of inadequate church extension and deficient pastoral superintendence, that the intemperance and profligacy and wretched condition of many in the working classes is to be described. N.S.A. VII 461.

W/ less burdened with seat rents to the exclusion of the poor; in the generous acknowledgment of the Paisley Account that dissenting congregations had relieved the situation; and in the cry for help of the minister of Barrhead for his eight thousand sheep with only one shepherd. In contrast to the barrenness of the first twenty three years of the century when only 6 chapels were built, 222 were built within a decade at Chalmer's inspiration. (1) Ministers hoped not only to evangelise the masses through church and school but to provide them with centres of Christian liberality and oversight for the relief of the poor. For the new wealth, however ill-divided, was already the basis of a large generosity. This was to be made yet more copious and fruitful by organisation and by the preaching of the word. They wished by Christian influence to produce a healthy Society and sometimes indeed they felt they had one. When a minister speaks of "this philanthropic age" (2) who can say that he was more deceived than those who so estimate the present?

b.c/

(1) Mathieson Op.Cit. 82 & 296.

(3) N.S.A. V 725.

With church extension went educational extension and the better remuneration of teachers. Three of the most vivid descriptions of social misery in the previous survey conclude with the hope for all children, "of a good scriptural education", a thorough Christian education, "and the elements of a plain education". Yet the population had grown so quickly that in many areas there was little likelihood of the old parochial system being sufficiently revitalised for such a purpose. Even without the disruption the long established provisions for education required enormous readjustment to meet the needs of a population that had grown from roughly a million in 1707 to nearly three millions in 1850. Industrial workers were showing a growing disinclination to send their children to school. To be universal, education had to be compulsory. The aim of the clergy could not therefore be realised without a far wider financial provision than the state had previously assigned through the heritors.. Thus though the indirect influence of the church continued, the Act of 1872 made education the direct responsibility of the state, just as the Act

of 1845 had tended to do with Poor relief.

One last point remains to be noted, in the clerical scheme for meeting the new social problems. It was their endeavour to retain that strong spirit of community so often prevailing in the old hierarchical society that was fast disappearing. That it did not require industrialisation to dissolve this spirit may be gathered from the change in the Highland situation after 1745. Over population could disrupt the old ties. But industry has been seen to act as a peculiar solvent, because of its comparatively mobile population, its great concentrations of people and the strained relations that are apt to develop between employer and employed. According to the ministers, industrial villages like Lochwinnoch and Blantyre had still a rich community life. They had neither produced the degraded masses of Paisley nor been overwhelmed by that "promiscuous and floating population" which the minister of Cathcart observed in Glasgow - the new barbarians and deracinés of Dean Inge. But a change in the master - servant relationship was as marked as the charging attitude to the acceptance of poor relief; and the turmoil

of the operative classes is sufficient to show that this relationship had taken on a new complexion. The clergy felt that a responsibility lay upon employers to keep moral oversight of their workers ("a strict but kind surveillance") (1) as if the paternal character of the old Lairdships had devolved upon the new holders of power; they expected that an employers influence would have wholesome results; and no doubt many employers, like Dale, gained great respect. The barriers however that lay in the way of any such influence were formidable - too many workers for close personal interest; task too mechanical for any corporate pride; profits obscure and sometimes excessive; the workers themselves generally overworked, after the fashion of the times, and powerless except in combination. When men began to make machines the kindly ancient regulation that he that laboureth "must be first partaker of the fruits", could no longer be applied; neither the machines nor their products had much fitness as part of the workers' reward. Circumstances favoured suspicion rather than goodwill and some of them are inseparable from large scale

mechanisation. Nevertheless the clergy were not deterred from thinking that a public works could have a far more satisfactory corporate life. Nor was it for lack of intention or lack of precept if the atmosphere of the Kailyard did not always permeate the mills. l.c.

These then, are the main lines of thought and action with which the clergy faced the new situation: their zeal for technical progress; their realisation of the need for social legislation; their hope to have a church sufficiently provided with buildings, endowments, and pastors to minister to the needs of all; their desire for a sense of community sufficiently strong to be at once the source and expression of agreeable human relations - and to meet the needs of the poor. Their general aims are highly creditable to them. If the first of them, love of invention, is scarcely consonant with a strict Biblical interpretation, if they attacked indolence more than pride, all their other aims are well founded in Christian Charity.

When we turn, however, to the clash between workers and capital we find them holding firmly by the

possessors of power. It is somewhat surprising that the Statistical Accounts should contain more comment upon the harshness of lairds - accusations ranging from the "love of money" (1) to "ill-judged and unfeeling oppression" - (2) than upon the stringencies of factory employers. But all such comment is eclipsed by strictures upon the insurgencies of workers. Always in their minds was the poverty of former days and the merit ascribed to enterprise may have blinded them to the temptations inherent in wealth and power. Where Adam Smith was remarkably detached they were deeply involved: "In the long run the workman may be as necessary to his master as his master is to him; but the necessity is not so immediate. We rarely hear, it has been said, of the combinations of masters, though frequently of those of workmen. But whoever imagines, upon this account, that masters rarely combine, is as ignorant of the world as of the subject." (3) The clergy were ignorant neither of the world nor of the subject, and their hostility to

(1) Page 49

(2) O.S.A. x 324.

(3) Wealth of Nations 51.

trade unions is in marked contrast to their tacit acceptance of employers' unions and their praise for chambers of commerce. The less immediate necessity of the workman to his master, his comparative helplessness, does not call forth the sympathy we might expect.

That this is a valid criticism and no mere wisdom after the event, gains likelihood because it was contemporary criticism by one of themselves. Addressing young men in Glasgow in 1841 the Rev. Robert Burns of Paisley accuses his brother ministers of social discrimination and anti-popular bias: e/

"It is a most unfortunate state of things when in a free and growing community like ours, an impression has gone abroad on the minds of the working classes that their professed spiritual instructors are indifferent to their temporal interests and still more unfortunate when such an impression is not without foundation. There has been for years past by far too much division among ourselves and too much party warfare, while the great practical questions regarding the physical condition and educational wants of the working classes have been overlooked. A most important and truly valuable end would be gained as respects the employed of all o/

classes, were they simply to be assured that they were really cared for by their spiritual instructors. It has been by far too much taken for granted that the complaints of the operative classes must as a matter of course be groundless and originate merely in political discontent.".(1)

This is a strong indictment, alleging preoccupation with ecclesiastical affairs to the neglect of the spiritual and temporal needs of the masses, and implying, as it does, that the clergy had an outlook on public affairs essentially unenlightened. Could it be that a church which had reached a secure haven on a tide of constitutional advance was living in fear lest another tide should sweep it from its favoured position? Was the broadly based popularity it had won in a fight for freedom, now being lost because it interpreted too narrowly the freedoms yet to be won and had too little concern for the bondages that more and more were coming to resent? Did it but confirm (when it could have done much to annul) that union forged in France between irreligion and the forces of the left?

(1) Burns Op.Cit. 175.

At any rate the descendants of those who were in
League with the "root and branch men" of 1643 deemed
themselves part of the tree that was threatened not only
by the cry, liberty, equality, fraternity but by the
much milder movement for Parliamentary Reform and by
all agitations arising from economic grievance. They
were upholders of privilege except where the rights
of congregations were being ~~in~~fringed. Presbyterian
dissent had certainly some contacts with the Friends
of the People and Neil Douglas, one of their preachers
was charged with sedition for a sermon in which he
compared the mental condition of King George III to
that of Nebucaduazzar. But Moderate and Evangelical
were at one in defending the unreformed constitution.
"In its fundamental principles it, like the government
of God, is immutable" - (1) so ran the jingoism of
the evangelical leader William Dalglish.

Was this a misreading of the signs of the
times? It seems so for the case for Reform was so
irresistible that it forced itself gradually and peacefully
upon the nation. Lord Cockburn says of the constitutional
struggles, "now that they are settled the common sentiment

among the few who obstructed their progress from sincere alarm is that of surprise at their fear." (1)

This is, of course, a Whig view, but the alienation of the pre-Disruption ministry from the popular political sentiment of the country is confirmed by the consistent return of a majority of Liberals to Parliament (with only one exception) at the elections between 1832 and 1910. With its creation of two churches the Disruption soon placed the clergy in opposing political camps. How far it altered their economic outlook would be difficult to determine. Paradoxically the triumph of Liberalism extended the application of laizzez faire; free trade became almost a religious dogma. The ambiguity of any criticism of ministers by their party allegiance is revealed in Shaftesbury's factory reforms finding implacable hostility within the party of Reform. XX

e/ If, however political loyalties were largely irrelevant as a criterion of charity and enlightenment they were at least an indication of social bias, and the charge we have quoted is one of social prejudice. This certainly appears in the tendency of the statistical Accounts to describe employers as public spirited gentlemen

(1) Cockburn Op.Cit. 407.

and workers^A leaders as "selfish and designing knaves". It was lack of perception to be so decided^A but this was the general view. The unfortunate association of all popular movements with Jacobinism brought blindness to real injustice.

When this is said, the same credit which Lecky ascribes to Wesley for the peaceful development of England, must be ascribed in Scotland to the ministers of the Presbyterianism which was agreeable to the great majority, building up within the nation a social solidarity greater than its tensions. The insights by which these tensions have been further resolved came to an infinite variety of types, to this Paisley minister, as they had already come to Owen, Coleridge and Carlyle, and were later to come to Kingsley and Maurice. Sometimes they came to men otherwise conservative like Shaftesbury and Disraeli. They came to Marx too but he would have cured the tension by first increasing it. His diagnosis was broadly correct, his therapeutics false.⁽¹⁾

X Kitson Clark in his English Inheritance has wise things to say about the limitations inevitable to the outlook of each generation." Most conceptions about the application of Christianity to social and political affairs

(1) Brunner Op.Cit. 15.

before the nineteenth century seem to have assumed the inevitability of the division of society into sharply defined social classes with a mass of underprivileged and of the poor irredeemably at the bottom, assumptions which we of the twentieth century consider to be immoral and unchristian. We should be wrong to consider that the thought of those earlier Christians was morally valueless on that account, or that we can with safety abandon, all the tradition that comes to us with the marks of that thought upon it." (1)

How relevant this is to the lights and shades of the situation we have been describing. No-one can doubt that in the pre-Disruption Church of Scotland the word of God had free course and was glorified, but the treasure was in earthen vessels and limited by its context. A generation which accepts death on the roads must be circumspect in its judgement of one accepting sweated labour. When the problems of famine and child labour have been more or less removed from this part of the world it is easy to under-rate the aspirations and endeavours of those who saw their malignancy but had never known anything else and saw no easy solution.

(1) Clark Op.Cit. 10.

The sufferings of the Industrial Revolution were by no means a new experience for humanity though the form that they took was different. Much of the evidence we have brought forward has shown the same perplexity and frustration as that of the churchman of today in face of, say, the problem of war. It has shown compassion and a sense of rectitude operating within a very different milieu but operating intensely. W/

No proper impression of the clergy can in fact be gained from a study like this, since we have been endeavouring to follow their movements in a realm somewhat alien to their primary function. Ever since King David was plagued for numbering the people this has been so. For the church deals not with classes that can be outwardly distinguished but with the individual in his relation to God. In politics and economics where problems arise out of self ^{collectively,} will its influence can never be more than marginal. "There is no Christian solution of the problems presented by human self will; but there is a Christian cure for the self will, and if that is effective the problem is (not solved but) abolished". (1)

Moreover the church as an organised body is always parasitic, in the pure sense, upon society and can only bring succour to the underprivileged by means

of the relatively privileged. Indeed, the foregoing criticism of its social bias, with all others made by churchmen, encounters the presumption, "nous avous change tout cela".

We therefore bring this study to a close with well founded tributes to this very epoch in church and state. With all its limitations it is yet to be reckoned one of the greatest eras in the life of the church: "If anyone should approach the history of this period with the key phrase" Ten years' Conflict" dominating his mind, he would be surprised to find that for five years of the period (1834-39) the Church of Scotland was a throbbing centre of uninterrupted and accelerating activities. At no period in its previous history, not even in the days it looked back to as heroic, had it displayed such energy and sacrifice for the evangelisation of the nation and of the world. The minor controversies, whether with the Vol^untaries outside, or between parties and individuals within, do not diminish the impression of an alert army on the march. Old possessions had been re-occupied, new territory had been won, and fresh conquests were in sight." (1)

(1) Watt Op.Cit. 152.

Judged by any fair standard the state too, according to Sir. John Clapham, had leadership of a capacity and enlightenment not to be despised - this judgement coinciding with the optimism of the Second Statistical Account:

"Historians have generally agreed that the country was on the whole ill governed under George IV. While giving credit for this to Peel or Liverpool, for that to Wallace or Huskisson or even Robinson they point to the failure to deal firmly and justly with taxation and the debt or to pursue a sustained and well thought out commercial policy; to the grudging repeal of the combination laws, neglect of the claims of agricultural labourers; blindness to the evils of unregulated town growth; indifference to the rapidly spreading plague spots of the mines and factories; tolerance of a poor law administration both too severe and too lax; and the like. Each charge taken separately can be substantiated. But there is a limit very soon reached - to the amount of workmanlike creative legislation or administration of which any government is capable in a given time. There was no limit to the call on creative ability in a nation hardly recovered from twenty two years

of war, shaken by ill comprehended economic change and bewildered by a growth of its own ~~m~~embers without precedent in history. Judged as governments are perhaps entitled to be judged, not by what proved practicable in a later age and more experienced day, nor by what reformers and poets dreamed, and were not called upon to accomplish, but by the achievement of other governments in their own day, that of Britain in the late twenties of the nineteenth century makes a creditable showing". (1)

This, then was the inestimable constitution much loved by the clergy and here, from Culter and Lanarkshire is a picture of the simple, prosperous community which was their ideal of social arrangement: "Money is plentifully circulated, regular employment is given to tradesmen and labourers of every kind, the church collections are large, while the number needing parochial aid is comparatively small; courtesy and good breeding are diffused on every side; the richer and poorer classes are brought into frequent and intimate intercourse with each other; and that kindly bond of connexion is formed between landlord and tenant which constitutes at once

(1) Clapham Op.Cit. 3/5

the happiness and strength of the country." (1)

This was a kind of feudalism shorn of its indigence and of its terrors. About the condition of Scotland in earlier times they had no illusions. Under industrial capitalism social order may have become an appendage to market economy but there it revolved round far less reputable instincts: "The first dawn of kingly government produced gibbets upon almost every feudal estate. Without trial or jury, the proprietor hanged without mercy or remorse - The evil became at last so flagrant, that a jury and bailiff or sherrif was introduced: but it did not cure the mischief; for this law officer was frequently gratified for the blood he spared; and if a culprit was poor, he was thought a very proper subject for the gallows. - In short, this despotic system was not effectually reformed until the year 1748, when these abominable jurisdictions were totally abolished. - The effect of this reformation was astonishing. No sooner were men emancipated from their fetters than they began to improve their properties. Within these thirty years, the face and condition of this country has undergone the

(1) N.S.A. VI 353.

happiest change as appears by a variety of improvements." (1)

Finally let the minister of Kilmarnock whose mills were the envy of Ayr - describe and represent the uneasiness of the ministry at the Factory system. They hoped for better days both economically and morally for the workers but it was a hope mingled with resignation for there seemed to be something inexorable in the cycle of trade: "Men, women, and children work in these manufactures six days per week, and most ten hours per day, and some twelve hours. And when this steadily prosecuted, the manufactures afford a fair remuneration and support to those engaged in them. The severest privations of the operatives arise from the frequent recurrence of the stagnations of trade, and the attendant want of public confidence. And it must be added, with sorrow, that some of the working classes increase their difficulties by their improvidence, and intemperate habits when trade is good. Here there is no complete remedy. After humanity has exercised all her ingenuity, and put forth all her strength, much distress has been experienced". (2)

(1) O.S.A. VI (North Knapdale) 258.

(2) N.S.A. V 552.

So we leave the clergy deserving, as it seems, in their social ~~influence~~ ^{outlook} neither unqualified praise nor yet the patronising indifference of Fabians nor the unceasing denigration of Marxists. Battling as Knox had done with an unmanageable environment, though perhaps, with less popular sympathy, and with less success in capturing the popular imagination, they yet left behind a goodly heritage to those who have entered into their labours.

Harnack says somewhere of the early centuries that the church had already begun to idealise its own past. How often since that time it has tended to stigmatise particular phases of its history. If both these features have appeared in this enquiry it has been through an endeavour to steer a middle course between them. The aim has been to find exactly where the Scottish ministry stood when the machine, with all its blessings and its problems, shattered the existing mould of social life and left men groping for a new one.

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