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DR. CHALMERS
AND
THE POOR LAWS

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A COMPARISON OF
SCOTCH AND ENGLISH PAUPERISM
AND
EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE
OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

With Preface by
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HON. SECRETARY CITY OF EDINBURGH C. O. S.
and Introduction by
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P R E F A C E

ALL students of social questions must welcome the republication of this volume, which contains the views of Dr. Chalmers on the English Poor Law, and gives an account of his own experiment (in Glasgow), which he offered as an alternative policy for dealing with poverty in Scotland.

Many schemes of poor law reform are at present being discussed, but generally with the view of poor law extension. The sentiment of the age, however, having rebelled at what it considers the stigma of pauperism, is willing to accept, not only the same help, but even more extended help, only it must be given under some other name.

It is well, therefore, to consider Dr. Chalmers's rooted objection to all kinds of legal provision for the destitute, and to examine the evidence upon which he based his lifelong opposition to it. He had an altogether different idea of the nature of the disease from that of the modern reformer, who, generally speaking, regards it as a result of economic conditions, and looks for success in the treatment of it, to a better distribution of

wealth, and a consequent improvement in the environment. To Chalmers, emphatically, man is greater than his environment, and a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses. He was convinced that the one thing of supreme importance in raising the condition of the people was the *character* of the people, and he considered that first things should be put first, and that all other things were subsidiary to that.

Education, and more education, but above all, religious education, was Dr. Chalmers's cure for the evils of poverty, and he associated with this a very real and vital connexion between the Church and the school on the one hand, and the Church and the poorest of the people on the other.

And the great contribution which Dr. Chalmers can make to our own day is the re-statement of the problem in relation to the spiritual life of the people. For, as has been well said, 'His political economy was never dissociated from his morality and religion. The essence of his teaching put into practical shape was this. To attain the highest economic well-being you must moralize society, and to moralize society, you must Christianize it.'

HELEN L. KERR.

INTRODUCTION

OF late years the poor laws of this country have become, as they do from time to time, a subject of lively interest. The question whether they are beneficial or hurtful in their operation is eagerly debated. Occasionally, amid the strife of tongues, reference is made to the opinions of Dr. Chalmers, whose abhorrence of the English Poor Law is well known. As he strenuously, though unsuccessfully, opposed the introduction of that system into Scotland, he is claimed to-day as a forerunner by the framers of the Minority Report of the recent Commission on the Poor Laws, in their campaign against the existing pauper legislation. Yet, to others, their ideas of a desirable substitute for it seem in most respects essentially at variance with his. Dr. Chalmers warmly advocated a State endowment for education and for disease of body or mind. For special reasons he considered those forms of State help to be free from the terrible evils attending such provision for the ordinary physical needs of life.

The framers of the Minority Report claim that they,

like him, would abolish the State relief of indigence. But the student of his social polity must question whether their proposals for the prevention of destitution do not merely give an earlier and wider application to that fatal principle which, with its corollary, the right to maintenance, made the English Poor Law, in his belief, the curse of the land—a deadlier enemy even of those whom it promises to help than of those on whom it levies its devouring pecuniary exactions. Isolated sentences quoted from his writings may appear to give countenance to either of those divers views. Thus the present seems a highly suitable time for reprinting in their entirety two of his most direct utterances on this question : namely, his ‘ Comparison of Scotch and English Pauperism,’ and his ‘ Evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Subject of a Poor Law for Ireland.’ The first of these is to be found as a supplementary essay in his *Political Economy* (*Select Works of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. ix.), and the second as Appendix III. to his *Polity of a Nation* (*Select Works of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. x.). In both he sets forth with the utmost clearness his conviction that the compulsory legal provision for poverty carries in it ‘ the mischievous principle of its own acceleration ’ (‘ Evidence,’ Q. 42). In other words, such enforced subsidies create indigence faster than they can relieve it. Therefore they can no more

extinguish want, or even mitigate it, than the application of oil can extinguish or mitigate a fire : and, certainly, I cannot gather from his writings that he would expect this disastrous aid to lose its malign character by being offered when distress is incipient, instead of when it is fully developed. Yet, as he thought, there was one notable exception to this general rule. (We can hardly class the endowment of education as relief of distress.) The State might safely provide against the extraordinary affliction of accident, disease, and infirmity, including mental weakness, since the universal shrinking from pain prevents the expectation of such relief from multiplying those evils. Who will break his arm because he can have it set or amputated gratis ? In the case of old age, however, as of all other normal conditions of life, Dr. Chalmers retained his unshaken conviction that assured State assistance positively increases the poverty it seeks to cure (*Select Works*, vol. x., *Polity of a Nation*, chap. xiii. p. 342).

Some further study of the two above-named volumes (*Political Economy* and *Polity of a Nation*) is needed by any one who may wish to understand the economic reasons which led Dr. Chalmers to so startling a conclusion. He was a convinced Malthusian. According to him the cause of destitution does not lie in the distribution of wealth, but in the inadequacy of the

available supply of food, *i.e.* of the supply which can be produced at a reasonable profit. In his eyes, therefore, any artificial, legislative redistribution of goods was worse than useless as a cure for poverty; seeing that it can only act by withdrawing those goods from the natural voluntary redistribution of exchange and purchase, and that, creating no new wealth, it yet holds out a false promise which encourages the population to press more hardly than ever on the margin of profitable cultivation. Certainly voluntary charity, also, merely redistributes existing supplies. But, as Dr. Chalmers held, it is more likely to be wisely directed, besides being far less apt to excite extravagant hopes. Whether Dr. Chalmers's view of poverty and its cause is deeper and truer than the other, experts must judge. He considered the individual practice of the economic virtues the only force able to rescue society from that dire evil. Whence I infer that he thought not lightly but most gravely of the effort required in that struggle.

Wherever compulsory poor relief had been once established, Dr. Chalmers, I must add, advised none but the most cautious and tentative retracing processes—processes under which no actual recipient would lose any part of his pauper allowances, and no parish would be obliged to forego its legal provision for the poor, but by its own choice. Thus, in 1824, this lifelong opponent of the State relief of indigence

seconded a motion empowering the Church of Scotland to petition against Mr. Kennedy's Bill for the summary abolition of the Poor Rate (*Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, by Dr. Hanna, vol. iii. chap. ii. p. 21).

Doubtless Dr. Chalmers's opinion about poor relief cannot but have peculiar difficulty in meeting with general acceptance, since he attributes the mischiefs of the system to its certainty, its legality, its apparent capability of indefinite augmentation ('Comparison of Scotch and English Pauperism'), the very qualities which most men hail as essential to a satisfactory scheme. Moreover, he regarded the ostentation of centralized public charity as an unmitigated evil. The more local and unobserved charitable efforts can be, the more wholesome and effectual are they in their working. These are very hard sayings for the philanthropist and the politician. They must be the despair of all benevolent people who do not share Dr. Chalmers's firm belief that men may be trusted to relieve, of their own free will, such cases of need as are brought under their notice—at least, unless their means are exhausted by the insatiable demands of an artificially fostered destitution.

Nevertheless, this exponent of unpopular ideas has here and there found a disciple, who thinks that he has spoken the truth concerning social reform. One of these is Mr. N. Masterman of the London Charity

Organization Society, whose book, *Chalmers on Charity*, gives a very just epitome of the views held by Dr. Chalmers on that subject. Another is Mrs. George Kerr of this city, who last spring deeply interested and impressed her hearers by her masterly lectures on the Edinburgh charities.

The two following papers are reprinted in full, with all the traces which they bear of the circumstance and thought of their bygone date. Their main subject, however, the relief of poverty, and the province of the State in that matter are burning questions at the present moment. This must be the excuse for reprinting these antiquated documents.

GRACE CHALMERS WOOD.

4 OXFORD TERRACE,
EDINBURGH, *October* 1910.

COMPARISON OF
SCOTCH AND ENGLISH PAUPERISM:

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF AN ARTICLE IN THE
EDINBURGH REVIEW OF FEBRUARY, 1818,

ENTITLED

REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE POOR LAWS,
WITH THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE.—ORDERED BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
TO BE PRINTED, JULY 4, 1817

COMPARISON OF SCOTCH AND ENGLISH PAUPERISM

It appears from this important document, that the principle of compulsory provision for the poor, took its rise with the enactment of very harsh and barbarous laws for the suppression of vagrancy ;—that by these laws, which were directed against ‘strong beggars, persons whole and mighty in body,’ such an offence was visited with slavery, mutilations, and death—that permission to beg, however, was extended to the impotent poor within certain districts—and that at length, with a view to prevent the burden of their support from falling exclusively on the charitable, an act was passed in the 5th of Elizabeth, whereby the Justices in each parish were empowered, along with the churchwardens, to assess for a weekly sum those who were unwilling to contribute. By a statute of the 43rd of the same reign, those persons were further vested with the power, *first*, to provide for the gratuitous relief of those who were unable to work ; and, *secondly*, to find work for those who were able, by giving them employment, or supplying them with the necessary tools and materials.

This statute continues to be the fundamental and operative law of the realm on this important subject : And the object of the very interesting Report now before us, is to expose the effect which, after the lapse

of about two centuries, has resulted from the administration of this law on the comfort and character of the people of England.

We have often imagined, that, previous to these enactments, the whole of the matter to which they relate had come under the discussion of two political reasoners ; and that one of them had merely expressed his doubts as to the efficacy of this compulsory provision, while the other felt quite assured of its final success in diminishing the amount of human suffering, if not in banishing all the miseries of extreme indigence from the land. Even in such a situation, we conceive, and anterior to all experience, there are many considerations which might have occurred to the former, and disposed him to be slow of confidence as to the anticipated good that was to flow from its operation. The very circumstance of its being untried, might lead him to suspect and to hesitate. And, independently of this general consideration, which always weighs so powerfully with men of a practical understanding, he would probably see, in the proposed measure, an attempt to wrest from the hands of Nature the management of a case, for which, by certain principles implanted in the constitution of man, she had already provided. He might see in it a tendency to enfeeble, if not altogether to suppress, the operation of these principles. He might fear lest this interference on the part of the State should relax the natural excitements to industry and foresight, and thus multiply the instances of wretchedness beyond its power of relieving them. Or, that it might relax the obligations of relationship ; and thus, for the substitution of certain regulated services, withdraw from the helpless the far kindlier and more effective services of their

own kindred or their own offspring. Or, that it might relax the sympathy and mutual dependence of immediate neighbours, and thus intercept those numerous, though unobserved supplies of beneficence, which, in parishes where assessments are unknown, still make up a sum of charity most honourable to the character of the lower orders. Or, that it might reduce the private ministrations of the wealthy, who, by the one act of a yearly contribution, might feel themselves acquitted of all those secret attentions and liberalities which the setting up of this legal machinery evidently tends to supersede. Or, finally, that by the publicity thus given to the relief of want, every dispensation of it would be made greatly more painful to the more delicate and deserving class of sufferers, who, rather than brave an exposure so humiliating, might choose to endure in silence ; and that, with nothing to depend on but such compassion as the system in question has diverted away from them—with no chance of being discovered by the charitable, but through such inquiries as this system has superseded—with no source from which to look for any alleviation but such funds as this system is impairing by its perpetual and constantly augmenting encroachments : And thus it might be doubted, whether it might not only shift the misery, without alleviating it ; and add another proof to the many that already exist, of the impotency of legislation, when it offers to interfere with the wiser provisions and the more efficient principles of Nature.

We are not now supposing that the man who musters up these various probabilities, could come to a decided conclusion against the scheme which has been suggested. But he might go so far, as most legitimately, upon the strength of them, to decline his positive

approbation of it. He might look on it as a scheme which was at best uncertain and hazardous ; and if his sturdier antagonist saw nothing but timidity in all these apprehensions—if he remained inflexibly assured of the wisdom of the regulations suggested—if he resolutely persisted in asserting, that augmented happiness to the lower orders, and augmented tranquillity to the State, would ensue from the enactments and the execution of them—if he looked, in short, to the experiment with undoubting confidence, while the other looked to it with feelings of suspicion and reserve—we leave it to the reader to judge, which of the two should have been designated by the name of theorist.

The experiment, however, has been actually made : And it has had the long development of two centuries,—out of which we may gather its actual effect on the circumstances of the people ; and, as it were, to afford us every advantage for helping us on to our conclusion, the whole island presents us with parishes in every variety of condition, and under every variety of treatment as to the management of their poor. We can point to some parishes, where a compulsory provision has obtained ever since the passing of the original statute ; and to others where it has been only introduced at various periods within the last half century :—to others where the elements of the method have been so recently put together, that the method itself is still in embryo ; and, finally, to others where it is yet utterly unknown, and the whole relief of poverty is left to the unfettered operation of Christian precepts, or of the kindlier feelings of nature on the heart and conduct of individuals. So that, if our two political reasoners were to rise from their graves, they would have the whole matter of their

debate before them in real and living exemplification. The man of doubt would have experience instead of experiment, and proof instead of probability. And surely, whether, on looking to the parishes of England, he there perceived that, in the matter of supporting the helpless, every domestic tie had gone into dissolution, and that, in the coldness of a public administration, every kindlier charity was departing from the land—or, looking to the Border parishes, he saw them fast hastening to the lavish expenditure of England, and with as little too of sensible influence on the comforts of their suffering population—or, finally, looking to the parishes of the North, he beheld that, under their cheap economy, all the relative duties of kindred and of neighbourhood were still in unextinguished operation, and that a high-minded, but uncomplaining peasantry, did, out of their own unborrowed resources, rear every family, and foster the declining years of every parent who belonged to them—would not he be entitled to look on these various parishes as so many archives on which, since he had left the world, the finger of time had graven in characters of certainty all his anticipations—would not he stand proudly vindicated in his claims to practical wisdom, and his antagonist be more strikingly convicted than ever, of being a most unsound and precipitate theorist ?

But how comes it, then, that the reverse of all this takes place in very general estimation ? How comes it that he who questions the expediency of poor-rates is usually regarded as a man of visionary, or at least of adventurous speculation ; and that he who resists every change of habit, or of existing institution, is deemed to be a man of sound and practical wisdom,

who, unseduced by any ingenious or splendid sophistry, sits immoveably intrenched within the safeguards of experience? He who would have been counted a theorist at the commencement of this great national scheme, is now conceived to have upon his side the whole authority of practice and observation;—and he who simply inherits the spirit and the impressions of his more judicious antagonist, is now branded as an audacious theorist. How comes it that the two characters have so strangely and so unwarrantably shifted places? What has happened during this intervening period of two hundred years, to justify such an exchange of reputation between them? The man who was then so proudly confident in his anticipations of good from the plan, has had every one of his anticipations most wofully blasted; and for this, the successor to his opinions and partialities, obtains the homage that is due to a sound experimental philosopher. The man who humbly expressed his suspicions of the plan, has had every one of them confirmed; and for this, he who now proceeds upon his conjectures as so many facts, because they have turned out to be so, is denounced as a rash and chimerical projector! So long as the theory was untried, it was practically wise to doubt it, and theoretical to befriend it. But now that the theory has been tried and found wanting, it would appear that he is the sound experimentalist who defends, and he is the theorist who disowns it!

All this, however, may be referred to that great law of the human constitution, by which we are led to associate with similar circumstances, the expectation of similar results; and which acts, in general, with all the force and certainty of an instinct. It is

true, also, that it acts, for the most part, with the same salutary effects. It is very certain that Nature will never deceive us, and that she will always bring out the same result from the same circumstances. But circumstances may be similar, without being in every respect the same ; and on this similarity may the strong propensity in question urge us to found an expectation in which we may frequently be disappointed. It is thus that children and the lower animals can be so easily imposed upon. Offer to their notice some general assemblage of objects which impresses them with a similitude to some former assemblage, and they will look for the same general results. They are not able to assign such particulars in the assemblage as have a causal influence on the production of the consequence which they anticipate. They cannot distinguish the essentials from the accessaries. It were well if the progress to manhood ensured a total deliverance from the errors of this propensity. But, in point of fact, there are many questions on which the heedless exercise of this propensity grows with the growth of men, and strengthens with their strength. If they have been accustomed to provide for some object in one particular way, they never think that it can possibly be provided for, unless in that very way, with all its insignificant specialities, to which they have been habituated. It is thus that they dread the very semblance of innovation, as carrying in it the ruin and overthrow of the whole concern that is at issue. It is utterly in vain to tell them that the thing may be done as well, without this or the other circumstance. They are such circumstances as were always present in their remembrance of the matter ; and this is reason

enough why they cannot conceive that there should be any comfort or security without them. Every appeal to the experience of other times, or to the practice of other places, would make no impression whatever over their own lively and personal recollection of all the details of their own time and their own parish. These practical men will take up indiscriminately with this or with that system, just as it happens to be the established one. If it only have the right of occupancy in their town, this is enough to vest it, in their eye, with all the honours of infallibility. Not one lesson is ever drawn from the great principle of the identity of human nature ; out of which it may be inferred that such management as has been found to succeed with men in one part of the country, may be imported into another. Not one ray of light is ever admitted to shine upon them from the experience of other times or other places. All is blind and headlong imitation of that which is immediately before them. To talk of any thing beyond this, will sound visionary to men whose minds are occupied to the full with that which they handle with their own hands, and see with their own eyes. Of this much they will have a vivid recollection ; and, by their constantly appealing to it, they will appear to stand on the vantage-ground of actual observation. Their persons are so surrounded with the materials and the manipulations of practice, that they will both claim and receive the same authority as if their minds were constantly exercised with the lessons and the observations of practice. They, in consequence of this, will be listened to as men of observation. But it is just the observation of men who follow the mere instinct of experience without

thought and without discrimination. They cannot tell what it is in the apparatus of their management that has a good, and what it is which has a hurtful influence—but because familiarized to the sight of the apparatus itself, think that all would go to wreck should one sacrilegious hand offer to inflict upon it the slightest alteration.

It were very convenient to distinguish this class of persons by some short and expressive designation. It would not be fair, however, to call them *practical men*—for there are many of this description to whose services the community lie under a weight of the deepest obligation, and who, at the same time, by their just discernment of principle, and by their enlightened application of it to the operations of their own department, have earned a well merited title to true practical wisdom. Neither would it be fair to call them *merely practical men*—for there are many such who, most conscientious in transacting all the details of the actual system, and most patient in the performance of all its drudgeries, are nevertheless without pretension to any understanding, and are never heard to utter any dogmatic asseveration on the absolute merits of the system itself—and who are therefore entitled to the character of a most useful and deserving class of citizens. But there are others who, on the mere strength of a prolonged and manifold officiality, take a far loftier flight—who adventure, and that on the foundation of a hackneyed experience, which goes not beyond the precincts of their own municipality, to affirm of every innovation, that it is wholly visionary and inapplicable—on whom the collected experience of all the parishes in the empire would be utterly thrown away—who

could read, for example, such a Report as that now before us, and, without borrowing from it a single hint for the amendment or the subversion of their existing practice, would still stand up for it as manfully and as determinedly as ever in all its parts, and in all its modifications—who are both most entirely ignorant of the principles of their business, and most entirely wedded to all its circumstantialia—who not only cannot move themselves but just in the way in which they were first set agoing, but who pronounce, of every movement which diverges from theirs, that it is a divergence from the wise and cautious line of experience. Such persons stand in precisely the same relation to a man of truly correct and enlightened views on the subject of poor laws, that a mere lawyer does to an enlightened statesman, or a mere merchant to a sound political economist. It is very true, that a lawyer may be an able legislator, and a merchant may be an able economist; and that there are many of both professions who, without aspiring to the character either of the one or of the other, do fill, and that most usefully and honourably, their respective vocations. But just as some lawyers, with no accomplishment beyond the art of special pleading, will confound one talent with another, in such a way as to think that, because they can skilfully point out the application of the existing laws, they can also profoundly and philosophically defend the wisdom of them; and just as some merchants, with no range of contemplation beyond the transactions of their own counting-house, can fancy in themselves a competency to vindicate all the bounties in which they have shared, and all the monopolies by which they have profited:—So are

there many persons who, because they are expert and practised in the business of public charities, and versant in all the points and penmanship of the chamber which they occupy, think that, on this single ground, they may take their bold and comprehensive sweep through the difficulties of the general question—who call out most strenuously for matters as they are, and that just because they have shut out the light of all that wider experience which indicates the way to matters as they should be—who, without looking back upon other times, or abroad upon other parishes, have only looked, with the most intense confinement of all their faculties, on the little infield of their own operations, and have gathered therefrom a fancied sufficiency of wisdom to overbear all the reasonings of all the theorists. Such a character, compounded of confident pretence on the one hand, and the merest practitionery on the other, it is certainly not easy to express by one brief and memorable designation. But we shall venture, for the present, to call him the disciple of mere localities.

We may now be enabled to perceive where it is that the distinction lies between such a person, and the man of true practical wisdom. The latter, though often branded with the name of a theorist, never in fact rests a single position on any other basis than that of observation. But he has the art of observation; and knows how to turn it to its legitimate purposes. He can look to one case, and has the faculty of drawing a lesson from it, by which he can enlighten and determine other cases of the same kind; and avails himself of the constancy of Nature in such a way, as to rear upon it a general anticipation. From his daily observation of human nature, he has

learned, for example, to infer, that dependence upon aid from others will impair the diligence of a man's exertions for himself; and that it both lies within the power, and is in general the disposition of the labouring poor, by the economy of a very slight and practicable retrenchment, to secure for themselves a provision against the wants of futurity; and that the strong instincts of relationship will, if not counteracted, draw a more secure and kindly protection around all its members, than ever can be offered by the cold hand of public charity; and that the sympathies of neighbourhood, if not relaxed by some ill-judged and artificial process, will afford a more substantial relief to the indigence which resides within its bounds, than ever can be poured upon it out of the treasury of an almshouse; and that the wealthy, if left to give on the impulse of compassion, will at length find their way to a more useful and discriminating method of benevolence than ever can be practised by the official agents of a legal institution; and that while, in the one way, the rich and the poor often meet and exchange with each other such cordialities of affection and good-will as go to sweeten every offering, and to turn the whole of their intercourse into a scene of enjoyment; in the other way, every ministration of relief only tends to multiply their antipathies, and to widen the unfortunate distance which lies between them—And surely if these be so many *facts*, authenticated by the habitual observation of his whole life, he is well warranted to conclude that it would have been greatly better had the institutions in question been dispensed with altogether; and if, as to stamp upon this doctrine its most striking verification, he can point to parishes

where they are established, and compare them with parishes where they are not established, and then crown the whole of his reasoning with the triumphant allegation, that the actual result coincides in all its particulars with the conclusions of his own individual sagacity :—Surely, after this, there must be some delusion in pronouncing of such a man that he is a theorist.

But the disciple of mere localities can be made to see nothing of all this. He is wholly taken up with the individualities of his own particular remembrance. Any change in the system of management would break up the entireness of that assemblage of means which he has been in the habit of contemplating in association with the object of relieving the poor ; and he cannot conceive that, with a different assemblage, the same object can possibly be accomplished. Still less can he conceive that the utmost dexterity in managing the details of an existing scheme may meet, in the same individual, with the utmost incapacity of pronouncing aright on the wisdom of the scheme itself—that he in fact may be a clever accountant in the poor-house, and an active superintendent of some one of its departments, and the wisest of all his colleagues in the business of framing regulations, and yet be as little prepared, by all this official expertness, for the general question, as if his only business had been to preside over the cookery of the establishment,—to taste of its charitable soup, or to deal it out with pointed regularity to the repairing multitude. A kind of talent, no doubt, is requisite for all these operations. Nor are we to wonder how they who possess this talent carry a certain degree of influence along with them, when

they denounce all who question present modes as theoretical, or how it is that this epithet, in the progress of time, has changed its application from one side to another, and how so many good people have been misled into the idea, that a whole host of practical authority and good sense stand opposed to the business of innovation—when they see such an array of resistance, and hear the contemptuous cry that is lifted up by clerks and vestrymen and city assessors, and the various subalterns or dignitaries of office, and the whole collected voice of council and committeeship.

Meanwhile, it is our earnest advice to Government to prosecute, and still further to extend these inquiries, of which the Report before us gives so instructive a specimen—not to shrink from the resistance which has now been adverted to, for in truth it is far more noisy than formidable—steadily to keep in their eye the deliverance of the country from a system, of which every new exhibition proves that it augments the wretchedness of the lower orders, and cruelly deceives them by a semblance of beneficence which it never can realize. And, to encourage them in this career of true and enlightened patriotism, we may venture to assure them, that the very men who are now so sensitively alive to the alarm of innovation, will, in a few months after the establishment of some practical reform, yield a most acquiescing compliance with it in all its particulars. The great maxim of ‘whatever is, is right,’ on the strength of which they are ever sure to raise an outcry against the enemies of an old establishment, will, in a short time, convert them to the steadiest and most determined friends of a new one. In fact, they will approve themselves to be good serviceable men under any

system ; and the terms ‘ theoretical ’ and ‘ practical ’ will, under another order of things, once more change their place and their acceptation.

Before taking up the Report, we beg leave to be indulged with one remark more in the way of general and introductory observation.

From every page, both of the Report itself, and of the evidence which accompanies it, we may gather testimonies to the deadly mischief that lies in the system which prevails in England, of providing for the necessities of the poor ; and we carry our conclusions no further than has been already done by a Committee of one of the Houses of Parliament, when we aver, that this system ought to be entirely abolished. Now, there is nothing more natural for some people than to ask, after hearing such a statement as this—what system do you propose to substitute in its place ? You are for destroying one set of positive regulations : But, ere you do this, is it not a fair demand upon you, that you furnish us with another set ?

Now, it should be recollected, that it has all along been our main object to show, that the poor laws of England are the result of a very bungling attempt, on the part of the Legislature, to do that which would have been better done had Nature been left to her own free processes, and man to the unconstrained influence of such principles as Nature and Christianity have bestowed upon him. We affirm, that the great and urgent law of self-preservation ought not to have been so tampered with ; that the instincts of relationship ought not to have been so impeded in their operation ; that the sympathies, and the attentions of neighbourhood, ought not to have been so super-

seded ; that the powerful workings of generous and compassionate feeling ought not to have been so damped and discouraged, as they have in fact been by this artificial and uncalled for process of interference. We deem that, in this instance, the Legislature have given way to their usual passion for regulation—and that too on a matter which they ought no more to have meddled with, than any matter of trade or agriculture, or even of family arrangement. They should have kept within their own province, and left this great interest of the community to be provided for by the play of such feelings and of such principles as lie scattered in every direction throughout the great mass of the community. They have done as much mischief in this department, by stepping beyond the boundaries of a wise and legitimate superintendence, as they would most infallibly do in the department of agriculture, should they offer to legislate on the rotation of crops, and take into their own hands a concern which ought to be left to the judgment and the care of individual cultivators. We stop short at the simple demonstration, that there would have been vastly less of suffering in our land, and vastly less of jealousy and discontent among the people, and vastly more of friendly understanding between the higher and the lower orders of the State, and, in truth, a greatly more vigorous operation of those various elements which conduce to the peace and prosperity of a nation, and to the enjoyment of all its families—had the parishes of England, in respect of their poor, been left to the influence of such an economy as still obtains in the majority of Scottish parishes. We simply aver, that it would have been better for them had

they never been visited upon this subject by the unwise and intermeddling spirit of legislation, and had the natural order of human feelings, and human arrangements, not been encroached upon. And we do think it a little preposterous to demand of him who deprecates the inroads of any artificial process, upon a concern which he holds to be better provided for by being left to itself, that he should substitute another process in place of that which he thinks ought to be simply abandoned—to ask of him, as the consistent way of following up his argument, that he should turn round on the very principle which lies at the basis of his whole demonstration, and come forth, in his turn, with his specific regulation, on a matter in which he holds all regulation to be impertinent and prejudicial.

Dr. Smith, in his treatise on the Wealth of Nations, reasons, and, in the estimation of the soundest politicians, reasons incontrovertibly, against the doctrine of monopolies. He contends for the abolition of this particular regulation in matters of trade altogether;—but we have not yet heard of his ever being asked to substitute another regulation in its place. He has triumphantly exposed the impolicy of many a legislative enactment in the affairs of commerce; but he does not carry his demonstration to any other practical result than that these enactments should simply be rescinded. It has never been exacted, either from him or from his followers, that they should propose some specific enactments in place of those they would destroy. He throws the matter altogether open to the free and unshackled operation of the great principles of Nature—to the desire of gain on the part of merchants—to the desire of enjoy-

ment on the part of customers—and, in a demonstration, every page of which is pregnant with true experimental wisdom, does he expose the impolicy of certain theories of trade which surely do not the less merit the opprobrium annexed to such theories, that, instead of lying dormant in speculation, they have actually been put in execution by Government, and accumulated into a system of practical administration. This is his terminating object. He stops short with the assertion, that it were better for trade, and for the interest of the country, that every positive interference on the part of Government were done away ; and he escapes all the hazards of the theorist, by leaving the whole concern to the free operation of Nature, and presuming no aggression whatever on any of her provisions, or on any of her tendencies.

Now, it is in this very way that we humbly propose to stand clear of all participation in any of those theories which are now passing in such rapid succession before the eye and the imagination of the public. We certainly do not mean to advocate either the potatoe system, or the cow system, or the cottage system, or the village system of Mr. Owen,—or any one system of miraculous achievement, by which, through some ingeniously constructed method of positive administration, it is proposed to combat that menacing hydra who now swells so gigantically, and stalks so largely over the face of our land. We would, in short, raise no positive apparatus whatever for the direct object of meeting and alleviating the ills of Poverty. This we leave to the theorists ; and we satisfy ourselves with simply asserting, that unfettered Nature, working in individuals, can do the thing better than regulation can ; and, on the obvious

principles of human nature, verified by the actual result, in a way most striking and triumphant, throughout all the parishes of the kingdom, do we aver, that it would have been the wiser part in our Legislature to have let the matter alone.

But how, it may be asked, can we consistently disclaim the adventurous proposition of a positive apparatus? In a former Number of this work, did not we attempt to regale the fancy of the public, by a speculation about churches? Did not we propose a mighty transformation in the existing condition of our larger cities, and in the existing habits of their population? Was not this the proposition of a positive apparatus; and instead of altogether abolishing the methods of positive administration, did not we just propose to substitute one such method for another, recommending the dealing out of relief from the produce of collections, instead of that mode of dispensation now actually adopted out of the fund as now actually raised?

In answer to this, we must borrow another illustration from the reasonings of Dr. Smith. There was none more hostile than he to any positive interference of the Legislature in matters of trade; and yet none more strenuous than he in contending, that, for the interest of trade, there was nothing more indispensable than the pure and ready administration of justice. And yet the object of a Court of Justice is not to lay any artificial regulation upon trade: It looks to a distinct and higher object altogether—even the protection of society from such moral injuries as it might otherwise sustain from the passions or the selfishness of its members. But in the fulfilment of this object, it confers a most important benefit upon

commerce—not by fettering its active and essential principles, but by spreading the mantle of security over their operation—not by thwarting Nature, but by removing the impediments and disturbances which lie in the way of her salutary processes—by securing to every labourer the fruit of his own industry, and to every merchant the fruit of his own speculations, and to every customer the fruit of his own purchases, and thus encouraging the full play of all those individual activities by which the great interests of commerce are sustained.

For the attainment of this object, courts of justice should be multiplied so as to meet the wants of the country, and be readily accessible to all its population. And churches and religion appear to us to occupy a similar place in relation to pauperism. Their great and primary design is, not that they should be linked in the way of direct subserviency with any of its ministrations : It is to moralize the people, and make them meet for eternity—an object which would remain as indispensable as ever, though there was no such thing as poverty in the land. But in the fulfilment of this object, the teachers of righteousness necessarily shed a most abundant blessing over this department in the concerns of human society. They liberalize the wealthy, and they dignify the poor ; and they call forth the slumbering sympathies of the former, and the slumbering delicacies of the latter ; and they, each in his own district of moral superintendence, draw into a closer acquaintanceship the people who live in it ; and they give strength to the maxims of prudence, and the habits of economy, and the ties of neighbourhood, and the duties of relationship ; and thus, on the one hand, diminish the number of the receivers of charity, and, on the

other hand, augment the zeal and inclination of its dispensers. And it is by such an operation as this, and not by any direct or artificial agency, which has for its formal and assigned object the relief of human want, that they in fact mitigate or prevent the sufferings of want, greatly beyond what any such agency can possibly accomplish. It is not by the adaptation of a piece of skilful mechanism to the relief of poverty, as its immediate object, that this great problem in political economy is ever to be resolved. It is by leaving the whole matter to the operation of the mechanism of nature, and by keeping in their right tone and action the principles which reside, or which may be implanted in the constitution of individual men:—And the use of churches is to foster these principles, and to supersede that system by which they have been checked and overborne.

It so happens, at the same time, that to each church in Scotland there is attached an organ of parochial distribution for the relief of the necessities of the poor; and in many parishes there will be discharged from it a yearly sum of from ten to fifty pounds upon a population consisting of a thousand members.¹

¹ The following are some examples of the population and expenditure in Scottish parishes,—*where there is no assessment.*

Parish.	County.	Population.	Total Yearly Fund.
Fraserburgh	Aberdeen	2271	£100 0 0
New Deer	Do.	3100	86 10 0
Lonmay	Do.	1627	25 0 0
Dunoon	Argyle	2130	46 0 0
Jura	Do.	1157	6 0 0
Redgorton	Perth	2216	99 0 0
Bathgate	Linlithgow	2919	124 0 0
Reay	Sutherland	2317	13 0 0
Farr	Do.	2408	18 17 0
Assint	Do.	2479	5 0 0

Of some of these parishes, it is reported, that the inhabitants are so connected as to provide for each other, or are assisted by private families; and that there are none absolutely poor in them.

Whereas, in such of the English parishes as we have had access to, the distribution amounts to from five hundred to fifteen hundred pounds *per annum*, on an equal population.¹

Now, to what shall we ascribe the fact, that, in the former parishes, with all this parsimony of formal aid, there is greatly less of the complaint of indigence, and fully as little of the actual suffering of indigence as in the latter parishes? Wherein lies the mystery of these striking phenomena? Can any man be so absurd as to believe, that it lies in the superior skill or wisdom of administration, practised in the one country, and utterly incommunicable to the understanding or the habits of the other country? The English are always looking to the way in which we deal out our supplies,—to the operation of the visible and positive mechanism of our public charities, for the solution of the difficulty. But this is not the quarter in which they will ever find it. If one of their own parishes shall ever be so assimilated to one of ours, as to reduce its expenditure on the poor from fifteen hundred to twenty pounds a year, and yet, to uphold the population in as great comfort and sufficiency as before—it will not be by any notable sagacity in the disposal of this paltry sum,

¹ Population and expenditure on the poor of some English parishes in Leicestershire :—

	Population.	Expenditure.
Barrow-upon-Soar	1143	£1868 17 0
Belgrave	645	803 7 4½
Countesthorpe	625	901 7 0
Lileby	1200	1764 0 0
Hathirn	1160	1015 0 0
Blaby	794	1391 5 0

These sums are expended on the poor only, being separated from the general sum, which includes church rate, county rate, and highways.

that a result so wonderful will have been accomplished. The truth is, that if a parish could stand the great reduction from £1500 to £20, it could dispense with the £20 altogether. And yet, superficial inquirers will always be looking to the way in which we conduct the ministration of our funds, and expect to find, in that way, the secret principle they are so anxious to obtain. We even think that we perceive the traces of such a misconception in the Report before us, enlightened as it is in its general spirit, and nearly as it has approximated to the truth in many of its valuable suggestions.¹ Let it be understood, once for all, that we look upon this as a wrong track of observation. It is not by changing the character or the method of administration that this great reform is to be brought about. It is by changing the character of the fund that is administered; it is by detaching from this fund its present attributes of certainty and legality, and apparent capability of indefinite augmentation; it is by stripping it altogether of its pernicious influence in the way of undermining or of deadening the activity of those principles, to which the case of pauperism must ultimately in its main strength and magnitude be

¹ 'The efficacy however of this, as well as of any other experiment which can be suggested, must depend upon some of those who are most interested in the welfare of a parish, taking an active share in the administration of its concerns. Without this, the Committee are convinced no benefit will be derived from any amendment that can be made in the details of the system; and with it, even under the existing law, much may be effected, as it has been both in single and incorporated parishes, where such superintendence prevails; and they think no means are so likely to tend to this desirable practice as giving to such a part of the vestry as may bear some analogy to the heritors and kirk-session of Scotland, &c. The heritors and kirk-session continue to perform the duty of adjusting the list of the poor,' &c.—*Report*, pp. 42, 43.

abandoned. And the apparatus of churches which we propose, is not so much for the sake of the organ that is attached to each of them, as for the purpose of recommitting this case to its proper and original securities :—Not so much for the advantage of an ingenious management on the part of the new kirk-sessions, as for the purpose of restoring to its unshackled efficacy the management of Nature :—Not so much for the sake of setting up a cunningly devised system, with the power and the emanating influence of which we are to go forth among the people, as for the purpose of leaving the people to themselves ; and warding off from them that soporific, which, in the shape of a legal provision, has been so unwisely and so cruelly dealt out to them ; and awakening from their state of dormancy all those sympathies of neighbourhood, and all those sobrieties of individual conduct which are the only unfailing guarantees of a happy and prosperous population.

And here we cannot but advert to the way in which this plan of church-building has been most happily characterized, by one of its sagacious objectors, as being *no plan at all*. That very feature in it which recommends it to us, is the thing which makes it look so simple and silly and inefficient to the whole host of committeeship. The slow dissemination of a moral influence among the people, and their gradual return to the habits and arrangements of their forefathers, form a prospect of which they cannot at all see the effect or the reality, because they do not see the parade or the penmanship of a great civic institution going along with it. To satisfy them, there must be placed before their eyes a piece of curious organic structure, with many turns and many complications ;

—and unless there be a goodly provision of schedules and clerkships and accomptantships, with such various agencies and manipulations of office as in the routine of their own chamber-experience they have ever been accustomed to behold, any plan stript of such dear and such loved accompaniments, will ever appear to them to be no plan at all.

But, one word more about the plan in question. It is worthy of remark, that if a compulsory provision for the poor had never been resorted to, the people of an increasing town would have gone on in greater comfort without one, even though the number of its people had been suffered greatly to outstrip the ecclesiastical accommodations of the place. The Gorbals of Glasgow, for the population and for the parochial expenditure of which parish, we refer our readers to a subsequent page, furnishes a most splendid example of this observation. The mere absence, it would appear, of a system which turns away the eyes of the people from the true sources of their independence and their comfort, will suffice to keep that people in the noble and respectable attitude in which every lover of the species must rejoice to behold them, and that, though the number of the clergy and of the churches be most wofully inadequate to the extent of the population. But the case is totally altered after such a system has obtained a footing—and after a mighty annual contribution has gradually arisen out of it—and after a population has been turned into the habit of leaning on this deceitful foundation—and after the object has become, not the continuance of a present system, but the retracement of our path up to the state of matters, which took place at its commencement.

The simple abolition of the method, in these circumstances, would carry along with it the grossest cruelty and injustice to the present generation of paupers. They must be seen out—and in as great sufficiency too as they were led to expect under the present arrangement. Every expectation countenanced by the present state of things to the present race of people, ought, in all equity and humanity, to be realized. And the great practical difficulty is, how to combine this object with that of conducting the management of this city concern back again to its old footing, and the population of the city to their old habits and their old expectations. Had matters from the first been left to themselves, there might have been no necessity for a more extended ecclesiastical provision, in as far as pauperism is concerned ; however imperiously such an extension might be called for on higher grounds, both political and moral. But, as the matter now stands in the larger towns of Scotland, and with the remainder that still exists of Scottish habit and of Scottish feeling amongst their population, we know not a single expedient so practicable and so efficacious, and into which all who are concerned will pass so easily as that, for the details of which we refer to a former Number of this Journal.¹ Let the new cases be met exclusively by the method of collections. As old cases die out, let this method be extended by the building of churches. Let the fields of superintendence, ever narrowing, and ever becoming more and more manageable, be left to the pure operation of gratuitous benevolence, flowing in one great and public channel through the kirk-session, but flowing, we will venture to say, in a degree

¹ “Connexion between the extension of the Church and the extinction of Pauperism,” in the *Edinburgh Review* of March 1817.

of tenfold abundance, through the numerous and unperceived channels of private humanity. Let the present ponderous system melt away with the dying out of the old cases, and the parishes in town be as unentangled with each other as parishes in the country. It is not, we repeat it, to any power or productiveness in the organ of parochial distribution, that we look for the main success of this operation—though we have no doubt that, under such an arrangement, a mighty impulse would be given to all the collections of the city. But the substantial, though secret principle of the reformation would consist in the resurrection, partly of a more efficient kindness on the part of givers, but principally of a more sturdy and determined habit of independence on the part of those who, but for this habit, would be receivers. We are quite sure that, when compared with what the poor can do for themselves, and what, if not cheated away from their true interest by the promises of a system which has done nothing but deceive them, they are most thoroughly inclined to do, all that a kirk-session will do, is but a humble and fractionary part of the operation; and it is for the sake of the former benefit, and not of the latter, that we have ventured to recommend a plan which, in respect of positive and productive administration, has been most truly characterized as no plan at all.¹

¹ In the parish of Dunblane, in Stirlingshire, there was, from 1775 to 1800, an assessment for the poor. The heritors at length, on finding that the number of the poor had increased, from the inducement of a regular provision being made for them, agreed for three years to contribute voluntarily a small sum. The experiment was made; the collections improved; and hitherto the funds have proved adequate, and no assessment has been levied for fifteen years. The number of poor in 1775, when the assessment began, exceeded 50; but of these, 19 only could be prevailed upon to accept of aliment from the heritors. Shame

Had the province of common sense never been invaded by the subtleties of scholastic argument, there might have been no use for the science of metaphysics. But when an acute metaphysician appears to darken the suggestions of this universal and infallible guide, he must be fought with his own weapon, and another metaphysician must arise to meet and to overmatch him ; and a positive apparatus of defence and of controversy must be raised, even though its simple and terminating object is just to restore to common sense all its prerogatives, and to reinstate this monitor in the original supremacy which belongs to it.

In our last article upon this subject, we confined our remarks very much to the pauperism of Scotland ; and the main object of them was to recommend the adoption of an expedient, by which it was conceived that the whole of our own country might be defended from the inroads of this great moral pestilence ; and even that part of it which had already sustained an infection from the contagious neighbourhood of England, might be restored to that pure and dignified system which has been bequeathed to us by our forefathers. We shall still reserve ourselves on the question, as applicable to the sister kingdom, to some future opportunity. In doing so, we imitate the caution that seems to have been observed by the Committees of both Houses of Parliament. We have no doubt, at the same time, that the mischief there

soon wore off ; and the number, before assessments ceased, was often above 40. At present, the number of regular poor is 10 ; —though there are 50 who occasionally share in the quarterly distributions.

The collections very naturally decline in those parishes where the method of assessment is introduced.

is only to be exterminated by some such instrumentality as we recommend here for the purpose of reaching an application to the character and habits of the people. But we honestly confess, that we choose rather to wait for more documents, and to have leisure for more consideration, ere we venture beyond the general and elementary principles of the subject in reference to England, or confidently come forward with the proposal of a remedy for which, in its various details and modifications, we are not yet prepared. Meanwhile, we shall proceed to make such use of the information already collected, as may keep alive the vigilance of our own countrymen, confirm those whom the evil has not yet reached in their resistance to its very first approaches, and convince those who have suffered it to obtain an incipient footing amongst them, that, if they do not speedily retrace the unwise movement into which they have fallen, they will soon find themselves entangled in a path, where, at every footstep, they must entail a new burden on the wealth of their parish, and a new aggravation on the distress and poverty which abound in it.

And first, it appears from this Report, that after the principle of a legal assessment has begun to be acted upon, there is no one expedient within the reach of human skill by which the progress and increase of pauperism can be arrested. We often hear, in the course of argumentation upon this subject, that the evil does not lie in the system, but in the abuses of it. It would be most obliging to let us know what these abuses are, and what is the practical remedy against them. For this is a great deal more than has yet transpired during the experience of upwards of two centuries. The people most inter-

ested in keeping down the mischief, have not yet made the discovery. The history of all the parishes in England evinces, that if the principle be admitted to exist, it sends forth a malignant influence, which cannot be stayed by any of the varieties of practical management that have yet been resorted to, or by any of the devices of practical wisdom which have yet been suggested. And thus it is, that there has been a steady progression of the evil, and that greatly beyond the progress of the wealth or population of the country. The chief and almost solitary example of a retrograde movement in the parochial expenditure which offers itself in the Appendix to this Report, is just such an example as, more than any other, will hold out a warning voice to our Scottish landholders. It is the example of a parish, where, by the wise and vigorous management of its clergyman, the maintenance of its poor has been reduced, in course of time, from £900 to £500 a year;—leaving this latter sum to be expended on the pauperism of a parish containing a population of about one thousand.¹ This is all the fruit of a very rare and miraculous achieve-

¹ Examination of the Rev. Richard Vivian. How long have you been in the parish?—Nearly twenty years. What was the amount of the poor rate at the time that you first came into the parish?—£900 a year: during the last twenty years of the last century, it got from £100 by degrees to £900. What has been its progress from the time you first came into the parish to the present time?—It has retrograded since; it has got from £900 to £500. Has it ever been lower?—Very little: perhaps £450. Is £500 the amount now?—It amounts this year to about £600 from various circumstances; from the dearness of provisions, and the trouble of removing persons.—*Appendix to the Report*, p. 115.

A very great reduction also was effected by means of a vigilant superintendence on the part of Joseph Sabine, Esq., in the parish of North Mimms, Hertfordshire; and yet, after all, the yearly expense is £600 to a population of 1001. The two following questions, among many others, were put to him:—From your extensive knowledge of the labouring classes, what do you sup-

ment; and it goes most strikingly to prove, that no modification which can be practised under the principle of a compulsory provision, will ever make head against the bare existence and operation of the principle itself. And even in Scotland, where some mysterious charm has been supposed to reside in the mere construction of our courts of supply, let this principle once make its appearance amongst them, and, as if by the rod of Aaron, all the divinations of all the wise men will be swallowed up and brought to nothing by it. The Kirk-session, with the minister at its head, which seems to many so goodly an apparatus, and to which, by our Southern neighbours, something like a fancied omnipotence has been ascribed, will oppose a barrier feeble and flimsy as cobweb, to the wide-wasting operation of a principle so pregnant with all moral and with all physical disorder. It is true, that in none, even of our contaminated parishes, have we yet attained to the strength and the virulence of disease which exist in England. But this, we are persuaded, is entirely owing to the want of time for the development of the mischief, and not to any superior wisdom of management. We know that many of our country-

pose has been the cause of the general increase of poor rates, and the decrease of happiness among them?—Losing the feeling of independence they had, and their indifference about taking relief. Do you believe there is any thing can effectually apply a remedy, but renovating those feelings?—By not paying those who are not entitled to relief, you will re-establish it.

Who can doubt the desirableness of the former expedient, and who can but suspect the efficacy of the latter, when he contemplates the actual expenditure which still remains in each of these parishes? And, besides, it is a reduction effected by *extraordinary* vigilance and activity; and that surely is not a good legislative arrangement which requires, for its safe administration, such an agency as is only to be met with in very rare and uncommon instances.

men are like to be lulled into a very fatal security upon this subject, because the burden *yet* in the Scottish parishes is so small, when compared with the burden on the parishes of England. They look only to the present amount of the expenditure, when they ought to look to the rate of acceleration. It is saying but little, and marvellously little, in an English ear, that the assessment for the poor of Barony parish, containing a population of forty-three thousand, should be only three thousand four hundred pounds for the present year. But it really appears to us equivalent to pronouncing a sentence of extinction on the whole landed wealth of that parish, when we add, that the principle of a legal assessment was only introduced into that parish in 1810, at which time the heritors contributed just six hundred pounds to the poor; and that in the short space of seven years, their burden has thus increased nearly six times.¹ We have not yet, indeed, in any of our parishes where the compulsory method has been introduced, nearly come up to the average expenditure of England.² But, in the great mass of such

¹ Till 1810, the heritors made up from themselves any deficiency in the ordinary funds of the session, without having recourse to any assessment upon the landholders; and the whole expense of maintaining the poor seldom exceeded £600 per annum. Since that period it has considerably increased, till this year (1817) it will be considerably above £3000. And all this is independent of the extraordinary relief granted to meet the pressure of last winter.

² The following are some examples of the expenditure in Scottish parishes where assessments have been introduced, which the reader will do well to compare with the expenditure already quoted, of parishes which are yet free from assessments.

Parish.	County.	Population.	Total Funds.
St. Boswell's	Roxburgh	508	£63 4 0
Galashiels	Selkirk	986	225 10 0
Innerleithen	Do.	672	95 0 0
Selkirk	Do.	2466	224 16 0

parishes, we are in full and rapid career towards it.¹ It is this which ought to convince us, that after the principle is once admitted, it is mockery to think of counteracting it by any thing that can be done in the way of modification or detail. It is this which ought to alarm us into the conclusion, that if the disease is to be exterminated at all, it must be combated in its principle; and that we must stop at nothing short of rooting out the principle where it exists—of repelling it where it is unknown.

And, that this is very nearly the opinion of the Committee of the House of Commons, appears evident, from their utter hopelessness of any substantial reformation being effected by any thing short of a radical change of the whole system.²

It is true, that the Committee of the House of Lords have pronounced a different opinion upon this

¹ The following are some examples of this increase in parishes where assessments have been introduced into Scotland. Wilton in Roxburghshire, in 1790, had an assessment of £92, 18s. The average from 1812 to 1815 was £288, 17s. 11d. The corresponding numbers for Hawick are £311, 1s. 8d., and £886, 19s. 6d.; and for Robertson £61, 5s., and £142, 10s. 6d. Parishes of equal population in Fife, where there are no assessments, occur with expenditures below £20, and £50, and £120. In East Kilbride, the supply to the poor in 1790 was £34, 6s. 8d.; and in 1810 was £213, 2s. 5d. In Coldstream, it was at the rate of £208 yearly in 1790; and £628 in 1815. At Linton, £20 in 1790, without assessments; and £90 in 1815 with them. In Jedburgh, the assessment in 1790 was £141, 8s. 5d.; and the average from 1811 to 1815 was £350, 6s. 4d.

² ‘Your Committee forbear to expatiate on these considerations which have pressed themselves on their attention. They have said enough to show the grounds which induce them to think that the labouring classes can only be plunged deeper and more hopelessly into the evils of pauperism, by the constant application of additional sums of money to be raised by the poor rate. True benevolence and real charity point to other means, which your Committee cannot so well express as in the emphatic language of Mr. Burke—“Patience, labour, sobriety, frugality, and religion, should be recommended to them; all the rest is downright fraud.”’
—*Report*, p. 2.

subject ; and that is, that the general system of the English poor-laws ought to be essentially maintained, because so interwoven with the habits of the people.¹ Still, however, the lesson held out to Scotland, instead of being weakened, is made more impressive by this testimony than before. For, granting this to be a sufficient reason why a people should retain poor-laws who have got into the habit of them, there surely cannot be a stronger reason alleged why a people who have not poor-laws should keep out of the habit of them ; or against the introduction of a system oppressive to one order of society, and productive, not of comfort, but of corruption to another, than to be told, that after it is introduced and persisted in, all recovery from it is hopeless or impossible.

On this subject we cannot offer a more distinct or judicious testimony, than that given by a Committee of the last General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, who are now accumulating, in communications from the various parishes of the country, a very rich and valuable mass of materials.²

As the progress of the evil, then, cannot be arrested when once introduced, it is of importance to know

¹ 'The Committee are decidedly of opinion, that the general system of these laws, interwoven as it is with the habits of the people, ought, in the consideration of any measures to be adopted for their amelioration and improvement, to be essentially maintained.'—*Lords' Committee Report*.

² The Committee of the General Assembly state—'That it is clear to them, that in almost all the country parishes which have hitherto come under their notice, where a regular assessment has been established, the wants of the poor, and the extent of the assessment, have gradually and progressively increased from their commencement ; and that it does appear to be a matter of very serious interest to the community at large, to prevent, as far as possible, this practice from being generally adopted—to limit the assessments as much as they can be limited, where the circumstances of particular parishes render them inevitable, and, wherever it is practicable, to abandon them.'

what is the kind of consummation in which it terminates. And here we are unfortunately not left to the mere exercise of anticipation ; for the consummation has already taken place in several parishes in England, and a number more are upon the very verge of it ; and the great majority of them are tending to it, and that most rapidly and resistlessly. From the clear and comprehensive Report before us, it appears that the poor's-rates, in some parishes, form so large a deduction from the rents of the land, that it has at length ceased to be an object to keep it in cultivation ! It has been actually vacated by its proprietors ; and as their place of superintendence cannot be occupied by others who have no right of superintendence, the result is, that even whole estates have been as effectually lost to the wealth and resources of the country, as if buried by an earthquake under water, or as if some blight of Nature had gone over them, and bereft them of their powers of vegetation.¹

We know not if the whole history of the world

¹ 'The consequences which are likely to result from this state of things, are clearly set forth in the petition from the parish of Wombridge in Salop, which is fast approaching to this state. The petitioners state, "that the annual value of lands, mines and houses, in this parish, is not sufficient to maintain the numerous and increasing poor, even if the same were set, free of rent ; and that these circumstances will inevitably compel the occupiers of lands and mines to relinquish them ; and the poor will be without relief, or any known mode of obtaining it, unless some assistance be speedily afforded them." And your Committee apprehend, from the petition before them, that this is only one of many parishes that are fast approaching to a state of dereliction.'—*Report*, p. 20.

It appears, by the petition sent up from the parish, that it has a population of 1900, of whom 620 are chargeable to the parish as paupers—that the whole annual sum rateable to the support of the poor is £1605, 3s. 7d.—that the expenditure for three months was £602, 7s. 4d.—and that, of course, at this rate, the expenditure for a whole year would greatly exceed the yearly value of the property liable to this assessment.

furnishes a more striking demonstration than this, of the mischief that may be done by attempting to carry into practice a theoretical speculation, which, under the guise, and even with the real purpose of benevolence, has for its plausible object to equalize, among the children of one common humanity, the blessings and the fruits of one common inheritance. The truth is, that we have not been conducted to the present state of our rights, and our arrangements respecting property, by any artificial process of legislation at all. The state of property in which we find ourselves actually landed, is the result of a natural process, under which all that a man earns by his industry is acknowledged to be his own; or, when the original mode of acquisition is lost sight of, all that a man has retained by long and undisturbed possession, is felt and acknowledged to be his own also. Legislation ought to do no more than barely recognise these principles, and defend its subjects against the violation of them. And when she attempts more than this—when she offers to tamper with the great arrangements of Nature, by placing the rights and the securities of property on a footing different from that of Nature—when, as in the case of the English poor laws, she does so under the pretence, and doubtless, too, with the honest design, of establishing between the rich and the poor a nearer equality of enjoyment;—we know not in what way violated Nature could have inflicted on the enterprise a more signal and instructive chastisement, than when the whole territory of this plausible but presumptuous experiment is made to droop and to wither under it, as if struck by a judgment from Heaven, till at length that Earth, out of which the rich draw all their

wealth, and the poor all their subsistence, refuses to nourish the children who have abandoned her, and both parties are involved in the wreck of one common and overwhelming visitation.

Let us not lose sight, however, of the main object to which we have restricted ourselves, that of keeping our own part of the country untainted by this sore evil; and for this purpose, let us go back and offer a few remarks upon it, in its incipient and least repulsive form. And first, we are in great danger of being betrayed into an imitation of the English system, in many of our parishes, by a desire to rid our respective neighbourhoods of the annoyance of begging. Now, it should always be kept in mind, that the great and original purpose for which this vicious system was instituted, was the suppression of vagrancy.¹ For our own part, we will confess we have long thought, that in the zeal of regulation against the nuisance of public begging, some of the clearest principles, both of Nature and of Christianity, have been violated. As disciples of the New Testament, we cannot but think that, if told by our Saviour to give to him that *asketh*, there must be something radically wrong in an attempt, on our part, to extinguish that very condition on which He hath made the duty of giving to depend. It appears to us, that to commit an act of direct and formal disobedience against the precept itself, is not more rebellious than to point an act of prohibition against the offering, or the existing of those circumstances

¹ 'It may be sufficient to state, that the statutes antecedent to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, were generally directed to the relief of the impotent poor, by the contributions of the church, and the alms of the charitable, and to the suppression of vagrancy and idleness.'—*Report*, p. 1.

under which the performance of the precept is required of us. At all events, we see no alternative between an entire and authoritative suppression of mendicity, and an obligation on the part of the authors of this suppression, to ascertain the circumstances of those whom they have thus interdicted, and to make provision for all the actual want that is made known to them in the course of their investigations. Those who are destitute, must be relieved somehow—and must have some way of making their wants known : and therefore we see no alternative between the allowance of mendicity under some modification or other, and the establishment of the very system which is now bearing so oppressively down upon the country. And we do confess, that, rather than have such a system, we would sit down under mendicity in its very worst form ; we would let it roam unrestricted and at large, as it does in France ; we would suffer it to rise, without any control, to the height of unlicensed vagrancy ; and are most thoroughly persuaded, that, even under such an economy, the whole poverty of the land would be disposed of at less expense to the higher orders, and with vastly less both of suffering and depravity to the lower orders of society.¹

¹ We cannot withhold from our readers the following extract of a communication from the parish of Maybole, in Ayrshire. ‘ It is also to be observed, as to the parish of Maybole, that, while some pains were taken to discourage itinerant beggars from remote places, the aged and infirm belonging to the parish were not prevented from begging within the parish. It is believed, that an interference to prevent the seeking of alms by the aged and infirm within their own parish is unwise, and necessarily attended with many bad consequences. The system, therefore, of suppressing all begging in the country parishes, is, it is apprehended, the first step to the evils of a poor’s rate ; and although proposed, was not adopted, in the parish of Maybole.’

But at present, we are only speaking in terms of comparison between a very bad thing, and a thing that we conceive to be much worse. Considering the matter absolutely, we hold this last state of things to be very far indeed from right or desirable, and should wish to see the distinction well established in the public mind between the two states of Mendicity and Vagrancy. The latter brings to my door a host of unknown cases from all parts of the empire. The former may be so restricted as to bring to my door only such cases of a small and manageable parish as could be ascertained by an easy act of inquiry, and as, in fact, might become the familiar objects of my habitual kindness and regard. In all the aspects, indeed, of this interesting question, are we constantly met by the mighty advantage of a more extended parochial subdivision. Let a large town be thrown into manageable and independent districts, within each of which the moral influence of Christian education, and all the delicacies of acquaintanceship may be concentrated as to tell with effect on the general habits of the population—and, though permission to beg were granted within the limits of every such district, the practice of begging, we are persuaded, would never obtrude itself on the community as a glaring and insufferable nuisance. There is, we are aware, a prevailing, but we conceive a most erroneous opinion, that the poorer districts of the town could never be upheld at this rate—and that, unless a stream of relief comes to them from the wealthier quarters, they must sink under the burden of a poverty, for the alleviation of which they possess no means within themselves. Now we can venture to affirm, and to the infinite honour of the lower

orders of society, that *all which the rich give to the poor in private beneficence, is but a mite and a trifle when compared with what the poor give to one another* : And, on the strength of this remark, which may be verified in many different ways, we do confidently maintain, that, under a system of parochial mendicity, established in a town which had carried to its right extent the method of parochial subdivision, there would not be one case beyond the reach of the gratuitous benevolence which issued through the organ of the Kirk-session, which would not be met and provided for by the gratuitous benevolence of those who gave to them that asked ;—and more, that, were this economy instituted, and in full operation, even the last resource of mendicity would, in by far the greater number of instances, be anticipated by the desirable and salutary influence of other principles. For the poor, at least in our country, have honourable feelings ; and, ere they made so degrading a transition in the eyes of their immediate acquaintances, they would, generally speaking, put forth all the industry and all the economy of which they are capable. And neighbours have compassionate feelings ; and, ere they suffered one of their own familiars to make such an exposure, they would ward off his evil day by a thousand little acts of liberality. And such rich persons as may be connected with the district, have compassionate feelings too ; and many of them would rejoice in the object of keeping an honest family from the street, as one of the noblest and most gratifying achievements of benevolence. And thus, the consequent mendicity of such an arrangement, that looks at present so appalling, would never, in fact, go beyond the limits

of a very small and manageable concern. At our present distance from this arrangement, we do not say that it could be summoned up by an instantaneous act of creation. But surely, it were well, in our cities, to take a commencing movement towards it; and we are assured that, by throwing the entire mass into such sections, as should afford to individual charity a certain and well known range for its operations, they would do what never can be done with the unwieldy whole, by all the strength and sagacity of committeeship.¹

There is another cause through which a parish might be betrayed into the adoption of poor-rates;

¹ There is an attempt now making to restrict mendicity within parochial limits in Fifeshire; and the plan has already taken effect in some of the parishes. Dysart is, mainly speaking, a manufacturing parish, and contains upwards of 6000 inhabitants. Its average annual expenditure on the poor, for the last six years, has been £277, 13s. This is exclusive of subscriptions raised to meet one or two extraordinary pressures on the operative population. In this parish, badges have lately been issued by the Kirk-session, to the number of twenty-two, authorizing those who wear them to beg within the limits of the parish. They are restricted to one day in the week, on which they make their round, and leave the inhabitants an entire exemption from this annoyance for the remaining six days. It is to be remarked, however, that this number of beggars is very greatly beyond the average of the other parishes in that neighbourhood. Among nine adjoining parishes, from which there are definite statements as to this point, it appears that the whole number of beggars is twenty-one.

We cannot but remark that, under every possible arrangement, our main dependence must still be laid on the spirit and principle of the population; that if the *morale* of a parish be neglected, even this well-looking arrangement may come in time to be oppressive; and we must therefore beg leave to state it as our apprehension, that, if the means of Christian instruction are greatly short of the number, this very mendicity may come at length to be so counted on, and so overdone, as altogether to transform that parish out of the Scottish character which originally belonged to it. And we should feel it as a reproach to any parish, if the previous expedients of secret relief from neighbours, and of discreet and timely ministrations on the part of the Kirk-session, were not effectual in saving from this humiliating resort every one individual who had sustained a decent reputation in his better days.

and that is, a desire to equalize the burden of the expenditure among all who are liable. We have occasion to know that this has acted as a powerful temptation to resident heritors in many of our parishes. And it may, on the other hand, act as a salutary remembrance to them, that this seems to have been one of the great and impelling causes which gave rise to the pauperism of England.¹ Let them rest assured, that it were greatly better for themselves to sustain, at all times, the burden of the poor, so long as they are provided for by gratuitous benevolence, than to sustain, at all times, their legal fraction of that burden, after the method of a compulsory provision is introduced—that it were better for them to be singly at the expense of warding off this mischievous system from their parishes, than with the view of compelling those who are unwilling to take a share, to be jointly at the expense of an assessment with the other heritors: And we trust that this consideration will have its seasonable influence upon them, at those times when they are most likely to be led astray by the very just and natural desire for an equality of parochial burdens among all the proprietors.

But by far the most prominent, and by far the most useful lesson which this Report holds out to us, is the mighty influence of habit and of character among the people over the whole of this speculation. In the course of the examination, this is always obtruding itself as the main and indispensable element

¹ 'This new and important principle of compulsory provision for the impotent, and for setting to work the able, originated, without doubt, in motives of the purest humanity, and was directed to the equitable purpose of preventing this burden falling exclusively upon the charitable.'—*Report*, p. 7.

of the whole business. When we read of such a difference of expenditure between a Scottish and English parish of equal population and apparent means, as that of £50 and of £1500, we are apt to wonder by what power or process of arithmetic such a phenomenon can be explained. Now, the single element of character explains it.¹ The arithmetic of the question finds its entire solution in the actual savings of economy, on the one hand, and in the actual squanderings of inconsideration and profligacy on the other: And when, to this, we add the dissolution of the ties of relationship which obtains in the latter country, we have, in fact, the whole materials of the computation before us. Now, this is the precise point upon which the present helplessness of England turns. There, they have to recover a character for their population, which, here, we have only to perpetuate: There, they have to implant a new habit, while here we have only to ward off contamination from an old one: There, they have to emerge from an abyss in which they have been fastening and deepening for 200 years, while here there is not yet a city of our land where, by a measure of promptitude, the population may not still be recalled from that descending way upon which they have entered. It is upon this consideration, not less powerful than it is important, that we ground our appeal to the whole influence and patronage of the country—that we would turn their eye to that which,

¹ We of course deduct from this observation all that part of the expenditure which goes, in the shape of poor's money, to the payment of wages—a consideration into which we have not yet entered, but which must be admitted to an important place in the argument, whenever we count ourselves prepared, in all its bearings, and all its details, for the question of English pauperism.

after every species of mechanism has been tried and found ineffectual, must at length be recurred to as the essential and elementary principle of the health and well-being of our nation. And we call upon them to have a care lest, by a corrupt exercise of patronage, or by the power of an example which blasts the virtues of every neighbourhood that lies within the sphere of its contagion, or by any one act which bespeaks a contempt for Christianity, or an indifference to the great cause of spreading its lessons among the towns and families of our land, they do not become the guilty authors of a system, under which, all that has hitherto shed a moral glory over Scotland, and all the dignities and delicacies of character which have adorned its interesting population, must ultimately disappear.¹

¹ 'Are you of opinion, that where men have acquired habits of economy, it is probable that many of these men, at the latter end of their life, would be like to have recourse to the poor rates?—No: I seldom meet with an instance of a person applying for parochial relief, where they belong to a benefit society, even when what they get is reduced from fourteen to two shillings; for they have a scale to go by. Such has been their moral conduct, and their good character, that, from the hands of the neighbours, or some society, they are taken care of.'—*App.* p. 76.

'I have others, who pride themselves in saying they never take weekly money; and those individuals who never take weekly money are much more regular in their work; they earn more; they are more economical and more industrious; and, generally speaking, they do their work better. I have never known an instance scarcely of families of that description coming to want, or having recourse to parochial relief. But those who are in the constant habit of drawing money every week, let them earn what they will, if they are out of work a week or two, are destitute'—(p. 73). 'A man who would come for parochial relief, and a man who would spend all he got, is the same thing'—(p. 75). 'Do you think they would be likely to resort to the parish for relief, men who were of an economical character?—I think it would be impossible for them, according to the feelings which they would then acquire, to apply for parish relief.'—(p. 101). 'Do you not conceive that the habit of providence and the feeling of necessity, on their own part, to provide for themselves, has

And here we cannot omit another class of interesting testimonies about Savings Banks and Benefit Societies. We cannot but think that some of the witnesses ascribe too much power to them, in the

decreased ?—Certainly it has ;—that feeling of independence has certainly decreased—the desire of maintaining their families by their labour has decreased I fear’—(p. 85). ‘Have you known instances of their receiving that (from 18s. to 25s.) for weeks together, and, on the occasion of temporary want of work, come to the parish ?—Not among the persons we employ ; they are of a different description ; but among the coal-heavers, and those whose business requires them to drink a good deal, they spend the whole, and are not provident ; therefore, if they are a week out of work, many of them are upon the poor rates ; and that is the reason why I consider, if they had not the dernier ressort of the poor rates, they must reserve something’—(p. 86). ‘Do the poor do their utmost to maintain themselves before they come to the workhouse ?—I fear there are exceptions to that. There are some we cannot keep out of the workhouse, do what we will, and others are unwilling to come in ; some, if they are put out to-day, will get in in a few days’ time’—(p. 94). ‘In those parishes in which you are so much interested, and in which such pains are taken to avoid new settlements, in what way have the present persons who have settlements acquired them ?—By perjury some of them. Are early marriages frequent in your parishes ?—Certainly. Do you think the morals of the lower classes have been much deteriorated of late years ?—Very much’—(p. 134).

‘Do children often apply, and say their parents will not support them ?—Not very often ; the parents generally come with them. Have you many cases of individuals abandoning their families, and leaving them to the parish ?—Not many’—(p. 91). ‘Do the young poor show, in many instances, a disposition to help their parents ?—We do not know much of that’—(p. 95). ‘Do you see any disposition in the young poor to help their parents, by giving them any of their earnings ?—No ; the poor-rate prevents that ; they must go to the parish. Have you many public houses in your parish ?—Yes ; we have five ; we had another ; and I did all I could to make them scarcer. Does much of the parish money find its way there ?—A great deal ; the publicans are so poor, from being numerous, they are supposed to do any thing to get men into their houses. Do you think limiting the number of public-houses in parishes, generally, would be a measure that would tend to diminish the poor rates ? I think very much ; I think the difference between three houses and six would turn many drunken men into sober’—(p. 124).

From the above it appears, as was to be expected, that the abandonment of parents by their children is far more frequent than the abandonment of the children by their parents ; and yet

way of forming a character among the people. We rather think that they presuppose such a character ; and that, in order to their taking effect, the process of extending such establishments must be seconded, or, rather, must be synchronized by the great process of moralizing and christianizing the country. They still leave this element as indispensable as ever ; and it is such an element as they never can

the writer of this has at present before him a printed advertisement of last July, containing a list of 54 parents who had absconded from their families, and left them chargeable to the township of Manchester, of whom 41 had disappeared during the course of the preceding twelvemonth. This cruel and unnatural practice, the legitimate offspring of the system against which we are contending, is now beginning to be exemplified in some of the Border parishes of Scotland.

It is worthy of remark, that the last quotation from page 124, relates to the parish of the very able and intelligent Mr. Vivian, who appears to have done all that can be done, under the method of a compulsory provision, for reducing the expenditure on the poor. He has effected a reduction of from £900 to £600 in a parish, while there are many parishes in Scotland, of the same population, that require an expenditure only of £20 Sterling. We consider his last statements, then, as containing in them the chief elements of that arithmetic by which the difference of charge between a Scottish and an English parish is to be explained. For let it be observed, that Mr. Vivian has most wisely, and with great success, discouraged the practice of allowing, out of the poor money, any regular supply to the wages of labour, as appears from the following extract of his examination. 'Is it not, then, the practice of your parish, to advance regularly, weekly, a sum in addition to the wages earned by your labourers?—Never ; and to that I ascribe, as much almost as any thing, the diminution of the rates. If a man has six young children, no one of which can maintain itself, you do not give any permanent relief beyond his earnings?—Never ; occasional presents, and that very seldom. How did you prevail on the parish to put an end to that practice?—By strong persuasion, and by desiring them to try the experiment ; and it answered. They immediately got into task-work, and got five-and-twenty shillings a week'—(p. 116).

We cannot close this long extract of testimonies to the connexion that obtains between the Pauperism of England and the dissolution of moral and domestic ties among its people, without offering, from the work under review, one touching specimen of the agency by which all the duties, both of society and of relationship, are again to be restored to the land. 'Have you any

supply by their own unaided operation. And we hold nothing to be more certain, than that, after these wise and salutary institutions have drawn around them all who are willing and industrious, there will still, in every country where education is neglected, be such a remainder of unreclaimed profligacy, as to afford a sufficient basis for the whole superstructure of our present pauperism.¹

parochial schools for the infant poor in your parish?—A great number. I have stated that the morals of the lower classes have greatly deteriorated in consequence of the drinking of spirits; but there is a circumstance which has operated to improve the morals—and that is, the number of schools to educate the poor; but for the increase of drinking spirits, their morals would have been considerably better, and, but for these schools, they would have been much worse. When did they begin?—From the period the Lancasterian and Bell scheme came before the public; I suppose about seven or eight years ago. Can you say you see any visible effect on the morals of those children at this time?—Yes; and for this reason:—the individuals who send their children to these schools go with them to the respective places of worship that these children attend on the Lord's day; the children of all the schools are expected to attend at a place of worship. Many of their parents, who, before, were not in the habit of going to any place of worship at all, have been induced to go, because their children attend there. Thus, they have been prevented from immoralities in conduct, in keeping the Sabbath, and felt interested in letting their children appear decent and clean; and this also has tended to increase habits of economy and cleanliness in the individual parents themselves'—(p. 79, 80).

¹ 'Do you think that the misery of the lower classes has increased in proportion to the increase of the sum for their maintenance?—I speak of that class of the poor who have been in the habit of taking regular parochial relief; for there are many who can still say, "Thank God, I have never been a pauper"; many of them belong to benefit clubs. It is rarely we have an application from any one who belongs to a benefit club, and very rarely that I observe any individuals apply for relief who have been in the habit of saving any money; but it is the individuals who have never saved any thing, let their earnings be what they will. They know they can take parochial relief, and with them their present enjoyment is better than future comfort. Have you many instances of the lower description of people making savings?—A great many. What are the wages out of which they can have saved?—Perhaps not so much as those who take relief. In proportion as individuals save a little money, their morals are much better; they husband

But there is still another consideration which might serve to reconcile many to poor rates and which has had its influence in leading to the adoption of this provision in several places of Scotland, and that is, the imagined necessity for it which lies in the peculiar state and circumstances of a manufacturing population. Now, it appears from this Report, that there is just as ready a principle of coalescence with this system on the part of the people in the agricultural districts; and that, if we estimate the need for the fund by the extent of the drafts which are actually made upon it, there is little or no difference observable in England between the one and the other description of parishes. It further appears,

that little; and there is a superior tone given to their morals; and they behave better, from knowing that they have a little stake in society. There are men who can earn thirty-five or forty shillings a week, with the help of their family and children; and if they are out of work a week they become paupers.'—*Mr. Hale's examination.*

'Do you conceive that this establishment has had a material influence upon the character of the working classes of your parish?—Very great indeed. What do you suppose would be the effect, if Friendly Societies were general?—That there would be no occasion for this Committee.'—*Mr. Vivian's examination.*

'Do you believe that such establishments would have the effect of reducing the poor's rate in proportion as they should succeed?—I think that such establishments, if general throughout the country, would have the effect of abolishing the poor's rates; it would entirely alter the character of the poor. I think, with general education, savings banks, and such an equalization as I have stated, in a few years the rates would vanish of themselves. Do you believe that such establishments would have a tendency to improve the morals of the lower class of people?—In an incalculable degree'—(p. 100).

It is the belief of the writer of this article, that the mere setting up of a savings bank in a neighbourhood, would render a very small and subordinate contribution towards the improvement of the general mass of character; that, at best, it is but an auxiliary towards the production of this effect; and that nothing great or serviceable can be effected in this way by any thing short of the direct instrumentality of education, and more particularly of Christian education.

that in seasons of depression, there has uniformly been as great a call for something extraordinary and additional to the common method of supply in parishes burdened with poor rates, as in those parts of the country where no compulsory provision had been established. And it still further appears, on comparing England and Scotland, that in manufacturing towns, of various business and population, the extent of their pauperism is not at all in proportion to these circumstances, but in proportion to the time which the compulsory method has had for the development of its own mischievous principle of acceleration. We may gather also, from this comparison, that in times of great fluctuation or scarcity, the distress has always been much greater in towns where this method had long been established, and less in those where it had been recently instituted, and least of all in those where it was utterly unknown : All serving to prove, that under every variety of human condition and employment, this mischievous contrivance goes to supplant far more effectual securities against the sufferings of indigence, than it ever can replace ; and that, wherever it obtains a footing, it aggravates the distress which it proposes to do away ; and that, let the mode of life, or the mode of industry be what it will, individual man can far more easily find his own way to his own preservation from all the ills and vicissitudes of fortune, without such a regulation than with it ; and that the only effect of this regulation has been, not to provide for such peculiar necessities as are found to prevail in one district, and to have no place in another ; but to assimilate all the districts of the land into one common condition of clamorous and unrelieved poverty, fostered by the hand that

was lifted up to destroy it, and embittered by the misery of a system that has done nothing but delude the people by its deceitful smiles, and its unsubstantial promises.¹

We have not time at present to dilate on this interesting part of the subject ; but if facts are of more value than arguments, we have them to offer in abundance : And we will venture to say, on the strength of these facts, that the cry of distress from our manufacturing population is uniformly louder in proportion to the extent of the compulsory provision. There are many manufacturing towns in Scotland where there is no such expedient at all. In Kirkaldy and its neighbourhood, there is a contiguous population of 13,000, of a decidedly manufacturing character ; and there the yearly expense comes to little more than fifty pounds for each thousand of the population. In the small parish of Carmunnock, about four miles from Glasgow, there are eighty looms at least among a population of 839, and the

¹ As a proof that the augmentation of poor rates grows as rapidly in agricultural as in manufacturing districts, we have presented to us, in the Report, the increase of expenditure in the two most agricultural counties of England. In the county of Hereford, the expenditure, in 1776, was £10,593, 7s. 2d. ; and in 1815, it was £59,255, 19s. In Bedfordshire, the expenditure, for each of these years respectively, was £16,662, 17s. 1d., and £50,870, 10s. 11d.

In the parish of Christ-Church, Spitalfields, the poor-rate seems to have come to its limit last year ; and subscription for the poor was their last resort. ' Provided there had been no subscription, would it not most considerably have increased the rate ?—The rates could not have been increased ; for I believe, now, if we were to attempt (and it is the opinion of more persons in the parish) to raise the rate to eight shillings instead of six, many would not be able to pay the eight who now pay the six. What would have been the consequence to the parish, if they had not had the subscription ?—I have always contemplated, with the greatest horror, the consequences, if this association had not been established '—(p. 68). ' Is there any limit to the relief given by the poor's rate ?

whole expenditure of last year was £22, 10s. 9d.; and there was not one application for extraordinary relief produced by the deficiency of wages under which they laboured, in common with the whole country. The Barony, one of the suburb parishes of Glasgow, with a population now of 43,000 might have been quoted as an example of the same kind so lately as 1807, when its expenditure was only £687, 3s. 9d.; but, though at present dead in respect of its peculiarly Scottish character, yet, by the record of its former and later years, it still speaketh. But all these minor cases of illustration are lost and forgotten, in the princely example of Scottish independence held out by the Gorbals of Glasgow;—a parish, of which we are substantially correct as to the argument, when we say, that it extends not by a single inch beyond the masonry of its work and its dwelling-houses—a parish, of which we believe that it claims not a single acre of ground beyond the site that it is built upon—a parish, at all events, which

—In some cases we give as high as five shillings a week. In the case of a large family, of four, or five, or six children, five shillings a week would not sustain them; then, what would be done?—There are several humane societies in the neighbourhood, and they get something there. There is a great deal of money comes from the benevolence of the public, the Benevolent Society and others'—(p. 74). 'You have a subscription in aid of your poor rate?—Yes, to the amount of £1600 for selling necessaries at a reduced price to the poor'—(p. 75). In the same manner, it appears that private subscriptions were raised in many other places, to meet the difficulties of last winter. That for St. Mary, Islington, was £1600 to a population of 15,000. That for St. George's, Hanover-Square, with a population of 42,000, was from £5000 to £6000 additional to the poor rates. That for the Gorbals of Glasgow, where there are no poor rates, but a population towards 20,000, was just £835. So it appears, that the legal charity does not supersede the gratuitous charity, but renders it more indispensable; and this resource is open to the people of those parishes where there is no legal charity, and that, too, in a state of less exhaustion, and with more readiness, of course, on the part of the benevolent.

has not one fraction of territorial revenue or importance attached to it, but which includes, within the little sweep of its boundary, a busy and industrious population of nearly 20,000 individuals.¹ Had it stood by itself, we confess we should not have looked on the history as in any way miraculous. But, standing as it does within the walk of one minute from a great pestiferous vomitory, that sends a withering influence on every side of it, upon all that is delicate or noble in the character of our Scottish population—it would be a most violent suppression of the gratitude and the estimation which are felt by us, did we refuse to acknowledge, that though we had travelled for evidence over the whole length and breadth of our land, we could not have met a more wondrous or substantial testimony than the one which this parish affords. And when it is told, that the average of its regular annual expenditure is a gratuitous sum of three hundred and fifty pounds, and that the whole sum required for the extraordinary wants of last year was £835, which was also raised by voluntary subscription, and that, among the administrators for the poor,—who does not feel a desire that this stately monument of the truth may ever remain unimpaired ; that, standing

¹ It may here be right to state, that in assigning a population of nearly 20,000 to the Gorbals, we do it on a most respectable private authority. The census of 1811 makes it considerably less. But we have access to know, that in other parts of that neighbourhood, this census falls short by a fifth part of the present population. It is also right to mention, that a great part of the present parish of Gorbals was added to it lately by an annexation from the parish of Govan—and that there still remains a debatable subject of parochial expenditure between those parishes, in virtue of which a certain part of the expense of the former, may at times be shifted away to the latter parish. At all events, this expense is considerably less, and certainly not more than seventy-four pounds Sterling.

on the brink of a great moral contagion, it may serve as a protecting vanguard of resistance to the country in its rear, and be our proudest bulwark of defence against such an invasion as England has long been threatening, and in which, if she succeed, she will do more to destroy and to desolate our land, than she ever has done, or ever could do, by the invasion of her arms ?

The ground upon which it is conceived that a compulsory provision for the poor, is more necessary to a manufacturing than to an agricultural population, is not, that the average of wages among the former, is beneath those of the latter (for the reverse of this is the truth), but that they are more subject to unlooked for vicissitude. It is not to supply a constant deficiency that the system is contended for in the trading towns of our nation, but to equalize an occasional deficiency. Now, we humbly conceive, that, for this object, the plan of a regular and compulsory provision is the very worst that could possibly be devised. For, once establish this system, and there is not one attribute belonging to it that is more certainly and more universally exemplified than its peculiar aptitude of growing ;—so that, even in the very best of times, if you only take periods of sufficient length, as of ten years, you are sure to find, that, in point of magnitude and oppressiveness, its increase just keeps pace with the length of its duration. And, corresponding to this, there is a peculiar inaptitude in the system to retrograde ; so that if, in the worst of times, the poor rates are resorted to for the purpose of meeting some urgent and occasional visitation, they are sure to obtain from this circumstance, not an occasional but a permanent augmentation ;—and therefore, in

this way, there is not a more effectual method of converting a temporary into a lasting burden on the community. The public know this, and they are up in alarm about the evil consequences of it ;—and a pressing calamity, instead of being met, as it ought, by the willing liberalities of the rich, who, if they knew how they could safely provide for the whole emergency, would have a pleasure in doing so, is looked at with an eye of jealousy and dread from the brooding pregnancy of the mischief with which it is known to be associated.

It is indeed a striking demonstration of the utter unsuitableness of a settled and compulsory method to the needs of a manufacturing population, that it is in those very towns where this method has been longest in operation, that you are sure to meet with the largest surplus of distress, and that, after all, voluntary exertions are most called for. So that the legal charity, it would appear, does not supersede the gratuitous charity, though it certainly serves very much to limit and to discourage it. For, a delusive confidence in poor rates, keeps back many from concurring in a benevolent subscription ; and an exhaustion of funds, produced by this system, keeps back many more ; and the apprehension that, by accustoming people to receive, you are just raising and nourishing recruits for ordinary pauperism, has a mighty effect in damping the charity of any humane enterprise that may be set afloat for the purpose of alleviating the pressure of any existing fluctuation : so that, in all these ways, a legal establishment of charity has just failed as egregiously in this particular object, as in any other that can possibly be assigned for it. It is, in truth, peculiarly adverse to all such

temporary devices as may be employed for the purpose of weathering a temporary emergency. In other words, it has aggravated those peculiar distresses which are incidental to the trading districts of the land: And, so long as it is suffered to exist, it will lie as a dead weight on the promptitude and the vigour of the only expedients by which it is in the power of one part of the community to lift, with effect, a helping hand for relieving the miseries of the other.

And, after all, let it not be forgotten, that every case of distress among our manufacturing population, arises from there being too little work for the operatives, or, which is the same thing, too many operatives for the work;—that to reach the cause of such a distress, even a subscription is powerless, unless it detach so many of them to some other employment;—and that if expended on the mere object of ekeing out a subsistence to men who have insufficient wages, it has no other effect but that of keeping them together at an employment which does not pay, and of keeping down the wages of that employment, and of perpetuating a glut in the market, which can only be dissipated by withdrawing a certain number of the workmen to some other objects. And it is truly mortifying to observe, that even the well-looking scheme of an ample and munificent subscription, is just another cruel and deceitful mockery of the lower orders;—that the money, thus raised, in fact passes by them into the pockets of their employers;—and that, in the whole range of possibility, there does not appear to be one other solid expedient for the relief of such an emergency as this, beside the possession of such a fund among the operatives themselves, as could afford them the means of a

livelihood for a certain time, without the necessity of working. This would clear away the whole mischief at once. This would give our workmen such a fair and reciprocal control over our manufacturers, as every genuine philanthropist would rejoice to see them invested with. This would elevate them at once to that command over the comforts and the condition of their own body, which they have a right to maintain. This would indeed raise them to the state of a great, independent, and co-ordinate interest in our commonwealth. But this they never will obtain, till they have purchased it by their own exertion and their own economy. It is nothing but the produce of their savings in good years, that will enable them to treat with their employers in bad years, and to hold out to them the dignified and the respectable language—that, rather than work for unfair and inadequate wages, we will repair to the fund of our former retrenchments, and, out of that fund, we will keep for a season ourselves and our families. Such a noble attitude as this, on the part even of a small portion of our weavers, would bring the manufacturers to reason, and invest them with that power of prompt and equal adjustment which, we are sure, it would be for the interest of both parties, and for the general interest of the country, that they possessed. Now, they can only come to this power through the avenue of their own frugal and industrious habits. It is a power that never will, and never can, be *given* to them; and which they can only acquire, by working their own way to it—by accumulating in good years, and laying by the fruits of them in store for the evil day of some dark and adverse fluctuation.

This, and this alone, will smooth all the asperities, and equalize all the vicissitudes of fortune, to which a manufacturing population is liable ;—but this is what the false show of relief, held out by an established pauperism, most effectually prevents, by cheating away the attention of the people from the only true sources of their independence and comfort. We know that, upon this subject, there are some who call evil good, and good evil—who malign as hard-hearted, a doctrine which would restore to the methods of benevolence all that is kind and compassionate and friendly—and who brand with hostility to the lower orders of the State, a proposal, by which alone they can be upheld either in respect or sufficiency. Such writers have leave to go on with their plausibilities and their hard sentences. But we confess, that our patriotism and philanthropy incline us to different counsels. We want no such ignominy to come near our Scottish population as that of *farming our poor*. We want no other asylum for our aged parents, than that of their pious and affectionate families. We can neither suffer them, nor do we like the prospect for ourselves, of pining out the cheerless evening of our days away from the endearments of a home. We wish to do, as long as we can, without the apparatus of English laws and English workhouses ; and should like to ward for ever from our doors, the system that would bring an everlasting interdict on the worth, and independence, and genuine enjoyments of our peasantry. We wish to see their venerable sires surrounded, as heretofore, by the company and the playfulness of their own grandchildren ; nor can we bear to think, that our high-minded people should sink down and be satisfied with the dreary imprison-

ment of an almshouse, as the closing object in the vista of their earthly anticipations. Yet such is the goodly upshot of a system which has its friends and advocates in our own country—men who could witness, without a sigh, the departure of all those peculiarities which have both alimented and adorned the character of our beloved Scotland—men who can gild over, with the semblance of humanity, a poisoned opiate of deepest injury both to its happiness and to its morals—and who, in the very act of flattering the poor, are only forging for them such chains as, soft in feeling as silk, but strong in proof as adamant, will bind them down to a state of permanent degradation.

And we submit it to the attention of our Legislature, if, in the moment of rescinding a statute, which, however friendly in aspect, has been most injurious in effect to the best interests of the labouring classes, it were not the true and the right accompaniment of such a measure, that they rescinded every other statute of interference which bears against them an expression of direct hostility. We should like, in fact, if the Government of our country never interfered with the concerns of trade, but for the objects of revenue ; and, on this general principle alone, we would venture to recommend an immediate abolition of the Corn Bill, which proved so obnoxious to the whole of our manufacturing population. But, when coupled with any act tending to the extinction of poor rates, we consider this measure as imperiously called for. We know nothing, in fact, that more demonstrates the impolicy of all State interferences with such matters as should be left to the natural operation of individual feeling and principle, than the

way in which these interferences go to counteract and to neutralize each other. By way of serving the interests of the poor, there was established, in the first instance, a method of compulsory provision, which, without serving their interests at all, has brought a most intolerable burden on the agriculture of the country; and then, by way of relieving the agriculture, there comes out a Corn Bill, which has surrounded Government with the cries of an indignant population. Would it not be better that all this bungling and mismanagement were cleared away at once?—that every interference, either in the way of help or of hostility, were conclusively put an end to—and, more particularly, that our labourers were made to feel that there was a free range of industry before them, from which Government had removed every unnatural obstacle, and on which they were invited to make their own unfettered way to their own independence? We are quite sure, that such a frank and liberal accommodation as this would enthrone the Government of the country in the hearts even of the lowest of the people. And in the same spirit we would recommend the abolition of every direct tax upon those who were in the condition of operatives; and would either rescind, or administer more impartially, those laws against combination, which have ever been a dead letter against the more oppressive combination of the masters, and very frequently an unjust restraint on the defensive associations of the workmen.

In concluding, we must add one word of explanation. We have spoken in terms of very strong regret of the establishment of a legal charity in some of our Scottish towns. We did not intend, however, to use them as

terms of censure, either against the administrators or the receivers of this charity. The truth is, that this corrupt system has only had a fractional influence, as yet, on the general habits of our population. The body of the community is still sound ; and we know not a town in Scotland which is not still in circumstances for that great retracing movement, by which it might be conducted back again to the happier arrangement of former days.

EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON THE SUBJECT
OF A POOR LAW FOR IRELAND

1830

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1. HAVE you had occasion to turn your attention to the state of the poor in the different parts of the empire?—More particularly in Scotland; and I have paid some attention to the state of pauperism in England.

2. Was the attention you have paid to the state of pauperism in England grounded upon any personal observations and visits to this country?—Yes; it was grounded upon personal observation.

3. Has that attention been pursued by you with reference to the state of the poor in Scotland for many years?—From the time of my entering into the ministry of the Church of Scotland.

4. There has been a reprint of a memorandum made by the late Mr. Horner and Sir Henry Moncrieff on the subject of the Scotch Poor Laws; have you read that memorandum?—I have.

5. Do you consider that that requires any material alterations or additions to give to this Committee an adequate representation of what the law of Scotland, on the subject of the poor, is at the present moment?—I am not aware of any alteration being required; I would add, that in the reign of William

and Mary there were no less than two Acts passed, and four proclamations issued on the subject of the Scottish poor laws, all evincing the utmost earnestness, on the part of the Legislature, to establish a compulsory provision in Scotland, which, however, seem to have been quite inoperative. The proclamation of the 3rd of March, 1698, complains of the inefficacy of all former Acts and proclamations; orders correction-houses to be built, one in each of the larger towns for the benefit of the surrounding district, that should, under a penalty of 500 marks for each quarter's delay, after a specified time, provide work for the unemployed; the sheriffs were further required to see this executed, under a penalty of 500 marks, in the first instance, and then £500 for each week of their delay; the magistrates were ordered to support the poor till those correction-houses should be provided; and the kirk-sessions were empowered to see to the execution of the Acts.

6. Referring to the Acts which were anterior to the proclamation of William, does it appear to you that the object of the Legislature seems to have been rather the punishment of vagrancy than providing relief?—I think that anterior to the year 1579, the statutes may be considered as so many rigorous enactments for the punishment and the repression of vagrancy.

7. The Scotch Act of 1579 appearing to be founded upon the English statute of the 15th of Elizabeth, with an omission of the clause which directs the procuring of work for the able-bodied vagrants, is there any historical explanation of that material variation?—I am not aware of any precise historical information upon the subject. I think that the proclamation of 1698 throws some light upon the question, particularly

as followed up by an Act of the same year posterior to that proclamation. Notwithstanding the very severe penalties wherewith it was attempted to enforce the erection of workhouses, the matter does not appear to have been proceeded in; and the Act of 1698, c. 21, complains of the inefficacy of all former Acts and proclamations, and re-ordains the building of correction-houses in the burghs, but that they should be built 'between such days and in such order as the Privy Council shall think fit, and *as the said burghs are able to bear the same*, notwithstanding the days named in the said Acts and proclamations.' The inability of the burghs then must have been one cause of their non-erection. But beside this, from Scotland being so much behind England in respect of its economical condition, I should imagine that neither the agriculture nor the manufactures of the country supplied the same number of resources for work as in England. It is further obvious that there was a want of machinery for executing these Acts.

8. Then it would appear that those proclamations for the erection of workhouses, had they been carried into effect, would, together with the statute of 1579, have completed the two objects, the repression of vagrancy, and the affording relief?—I am not sure that in effect they would have completed those objects, but that they should do so was evidently the intention of the Legislature.

9. Are there any other means of accounting for the non-execution of those statutes and proclamations for the erection of workhouses?—I am not aware of any other.

10. Are the Scotch laws with respect to the relief of the poor found in practice to create a right in the

poor to demand relief?—I conceive that a sound interpreter of law would educe as valid a right to relief from the statute book of Scotland as from that of England. In this respect there is a great similitude between them, and the chief difference seems to lie in the habit and practice of the two countries.

11. Does it appear that the relief of the able-bodied poor is practically contemplated or enforced under the law of Scotland, if such able-bodied poor are out of employment?—There was a material decision upon this question so recent as the year 1806: two persons having objected to an assessment imposed by the unanimous determination of the heritors and kirk-session, for the relief of a number of able-bodied labourers, who in ordinary times supported themselves, but had been reduced to want by the failure of two successive crops; the court sustained the assessment.

12. The law of Scotland, as explained in the memorandum which has been adverted to, and in the answer you have given, having appeared to recognize the principle of assessment, can you inform the Committee when that principle of assessment was first introduced into practice?—It is certain that it was acted upon in very few parishes indeed prior to 1740. The Appendix to the Third Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Laws in 1818, contains so many numerical abstracts, which were found to be very erroneous. The errors, however, were rectified next year by a Committee of the General Assembly, who framed new abstracts, and subjoined them to a Supplementary Report. These latter abstracts I have found to be quite accurate, as far as I have compared them with the original

communications of the Scottish clergy, but unfortunately they do not furnish the dates of the introduction of assessment into our Scottish parishes. The first abstracts do present us with some information upon this subject, and in as far as they can be relied upon, there were about eight parishes under assessment in the year 1740.

13. In the Third Report it is stated, that in 700 reported cases there appear only three instances of assessment prior to 1700; that from 1700 to 1800 there were ninety-three cases of assessment, and from 1800 to 1817 there were forty-nine new cases of assessment. Now, though that may not be precisely accurate, do you consider that it affords sufficient approximation to the truth, to give an index to the origin and progress of assessment in Scotland?—I feel myself authorized to say, that there were very few parishes indeed that had adopted the method of assessment prior to 1740.

14. To what cause do you attribute the non-application of the principle of assessment prior to that year?—There is an Act which permits the alternative of begging under certain regulations, and the preference of all parties for this seems to have made the progress of assessment among the Scottish parishes a very slow one.

15. Were there any circumstances in the internal state of Scotland, and in the state of society, which, in your opinion, impeded the introduction or the progress of assessment at that time?—It appears to me that the progress of assessments, instead of being impeded, was superseded or anticipated by the progress of education and good habits amongst the people.

16. In what condition does Scotland appear to have been about the beginning of the last century, and the

close of the century preceding, prior to the introduction of the principle of assessment?—In the middle of the sixteenth century there was a very efficient system of Christian instruction in the parishes of Scotland, and it is understood that the country at that time was in a very healthful moral condition; immediately after the Restoration the Act for the establishment of parochial schools was repealed, and there was an attempt to enforce episcopacy upon the Scottish population, which gave rise to what may be termed religious wars, that lasted for nearly thirty years; from the disorder and turbulence of that period, along with the suspension of parochial education, the population seems to have deteriorated very rapidly. There is a most frightful picture given of the state of Scotland in 1698, by Fletcher of Saltoun, as appears from the following extract:—

‘There are at this day in Scotland (besides a great number of families very meanly provided for by the church boxes, with others who, with living upon bad food, fall into various diseases) 200,000 people begging from door to door. These are not only no ways advantageous, but a very grievous burden to so poor a country; and though the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly, by reason of the present great distress, yet in all times there have been about 100,000 of these vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or submission either to the laws of the land, or even of those of God and nature; father incestuously accompanying their own daughters, the son with the mother, and the brother with the sister. No magistrate could ever discover or be informed which way any of these wretches died, or that ever they were baptized. Many murders have

been discovered among them ; and they are not only a most unspeakable oppression to poor tenants (who, if they give not bread or some sort of provision to perhaps forty such villains in one day, are sure to be insulted by them), but they rob many poor people who live in houses distant from any neighbourhood. In years of plenty many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days ; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other the like public occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together.'

17. Does it appear, from historical records, that that state of things continued long after the date of the work of Fletcher of Saltoun ?—It appears, from very distinct historical documents, that that state of things subsided almost *per saltum*, very suddenly indeed, when the population had leave to repose from the religious persecutions, and the parochial system of education was again general. They were besides plied from Sabbath to Sabbath by an efficient and acceptable clergy, in consequence of which, the transformation appears to have been quite marvellous. The extract I have now read, refers to the year 1698. The extract I am about to read, refers to a period of time only nineteen years distant, 1717. It is taken from Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. 'The people,' says he, 'are restrained in the ordinary practice of common immoralities, such as swearing, drunkenness, slander, fornication, and the like. As to theft, murder, and other capital crimes, they come under the cognizance of the civil magistrate as in other countries ; but in those things which the church has power to punish, the people being constantly and

impartially prosecuted, they are thereby the more restrained, kept sober, and under government, and you may pass through twenty towns in Scotland without seeing any broil, or hearing one oath sworn in the streets ; whereas, if a blind man was to come from there into England, he shall know the first town he sets his foot in within the English border, by hearing the name of God blasphemed and profanely used, even by the very little children on the street.'

18. Are there any other documents to which the Committee can refer, save the Third Report, to show in how many parishes the principle of assessment had been applied at the time that Defoe explained the improved state of society ?—I am not aware of any other documents, but I am thoroughly convinced it was not introduced at that time into half-a-dozen parishes.

19. Is the date of the first application of the principle of assessment known ?—I do not think it is.

20. In what particular part of Scotland was the principle of assessment first applied ?—Those parts which were contiguous to England ; and when it did proceed northwards, it began generally with the large towns.

21. Can you state the entire number of parishes of Scotland at the present moment, and in what number the principle of assessment is applied ?—By the Appendix that is subjoined to the Third Report, the number of parishes where assessments are now introduced is 152. The total number of parishes in Scotland is between 900 and 1000.

22. What is the geographical limit, if there be any, within which the principle of assessment is applied at the present moment ?—I can scarcely state a geogra-

phical limit ; it is nearly universal in Berwick and Roxburghshire, which are border counties ; I think it is very prevalent in Selkirkshire, and perhaps not so prevalent in Peeblesshire ; then there are isolated parishes further north where the system has been introduced.

23. Are there many parishes north of the Frith of Forth where the principle of assessment has been introduced ?—I think I can safely say that there are not twenty to the north of the Forth and Clyde.

24. Do you consider the system of assessment in Scotland to be on the increase or otherwise ?—It is making progress both in the number of parishes and in the amount of the assessment.

25. To what causes do you attribute the advance of the principle of assessment ; is it not the natural inference that the principle has been found a beneficial one ?—In the first place, I think it a very natural imagination, that should there be a vacancy or a deficit in respect of means, the patent way of supplying that vacancy is just to pour relief into it, and it is very natural to proceed upon that imagination when urged by a sense of short-coming in the supplies which are provided in a voluntary way ; it is a very natural and frequent, though I think mistaken imagination, that an assessment will make good the deficiency. It is not from the impulse, however, which led to the assessment, that I would draw instruction upon this subject, but from the experience which ascertains the result of it. And here I would state another cause which, in many cases, has been the moving force that led to the introduction of assessments ; there are many non-resident heritors in our parishes, and from a desire that the burthen

should be equalized between the resident and non-resident, the principle of assessment has been introduced, very much afterwards to the regret and repentance of all, when they have found that it would have been far easier to bear the whole burthen of a gratuitous economy than the share only which fell to them of a compulsory system.

26. It is stated in the Report of the General Assembly, in 1817, that in a great proportion of the country parishes in which legal assessments have been introduced, they have been afterwards abandoned, either because it has been found by experience that whatever addition the ordinary funds required might be obtained at much less expense by means of voluntary contribution, where any urgent pressure on the poor should render it necessary, or because the regular assessment in those parishes has been very generally observed to produce an influx of paupers from other parishes, who, in three years, can acquire a legal settlement, if during that time they have supported themselves by their own industry, aggravating in this way the parochial burdens beyond all reasonable proportion; do you concur in those observations, first, with respect to the fact that the assessment principle has been abandoned in some parishes after it is introduced, and next, as to the causes there assigned for the alteration of the practice? —I think that the causes are quite adequate to justify the abandonment of the method of assessment; but I do not think that in point of fact, they have led to that result in more than a few instances; so that the assessment, upon the whole, is making progress in Scotland.

27. Will you describe the mode of proceeding on

the subject of the poor in an unassessed parish in Scotland?—The chief fund for the relief of the poor is derived from voluntary collections at the church door; and, in some instances, the collection is made more effective by its being received within doors, the elders carrying about what they call a ladle, and making pointed and personal application with it to each individual before the dismissal of the congregation. That method obtains, however, in comparatively a small number of Scotch parishes; the collection being generally held at the church door, where the people give their offerings into a plate as they pass. The produce of the collection is the chief fund out of which the poor are relieved in the unassessed parishes; there are occasionally other funds, however, as interest from small sums of money left to the kirk-sessions. In regard to administration, the heritors or landed proprietors have a right, along with the minister and elders, to the conjunct management of one-half of the collection, though, in point of fact, they seldom avail themselves of it. Practically, there are few instances of a conjunct administration, excepting where the parishes are assessed; so that in the great majority of these parishes, the administration may be said to lie solely with the minister and elders.

28. Is the administration under any settled principle, limiting the objects upon which it can be expended, or is it at the discretion of the parties administering?—Almost entirely at the discretion of the minister and kirk-session.

29. In the assessed parishes, what is the mode of procedure with respect to the relief of the poor?—After the method of assessment was introduced, the

collections fell off very rapidly, and the heritors have stated meetings along with the kirk-session, so that the fund may be said to be under the conjunct administration of the heritors and the kirk-session.

30. When there is an assessment, is the administration of that assessment carried on upon the admission of a principle of right on the part of the poor to demand the relief, or is the expenditure discretionary on the part of the heritors and kirk-session?—There is a rapid growth on the part of the population of the feeling that they have a right to relief; and in regard to the discretionary administration by the kirk-session and heritors, this was very much restrained by a practice that obtained till recently, of appealing from their decision to the sheriff of the county, or to a neighbouring justice. However, by a recent decision, it has been found that an appeal is not competent save to the Court of Session, and this may be said practically to have rendered the parochial courts of administration ultimate, the method of prosecuting the appeal being now so very operose and expensive that it is seldom resorted to.

31. Then has the result of this principle of law that you have described, by throwing great difficulties in the way of appeal, been to render the disposal of those funds by the heritors and kirk-session subject to their discretion only?—I believe that this decision may have retarded in some degree the progress of the expenditure; but there is one peculiarity in our Scottish parishes which some have thought counter-balances any benefit that may arise from the difficulty of appeal. The kirk-session have a right, along with the heritors, to raise money for the relief of the poor, though the burden of the assessment falls wholly

upon the land. I cannot say how far this may operate insensibly in accelerating the progress of assessments.

32. Is not the rate apportioned between the tenants and the heritors?—It is apportioned between the tenant and the heritors, but the tenant has no voice in it. The sum to be raised is determined by the heritors and the kirk-session, which last are not payers.

33. Therefore you do not think that the check of individual interest acts as strongly as might be in the reduction of those assessments?—It is certainly very much in the power of the minister and the kirk-session to speed the progress of assessments, not certainly from any indifference on their part to the interest of the heritors, but from the feeling of its being conducive to the good of the population.

34. Have you had any means of comparing the difference of expense under the assessed and the unassessed system in Scotland?—When I received my summons to attend this Committee, I was very anxious to look into the original communications from the Scottish clergy, which form the basis of those numerical abstracts that are appended to the Supplementary Report which has been already referred to. I have thus been able to collect a few instances, taken at random, and which I think will make that matter clear. I have noted a few parishes from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, where there is an assessment, and compared them with parishes of about an equal population in the Synod of Argyle, which is not assessed. In Dunse the population is 3082, the fund for the poor £615, 13s. 6d. ; in Kilmichael and Glassary the population is 3400 unassessed, fund £30, 0s. 6d.,

less by a twentieth part than the former, although with a larger population; Eccles, population 1820, fund £327; South Knapdale in Argyleshire, population 1720, fund £33; Coldstream, population 2384, fund £615; North Knapdale, 2184, fund £15, 10s.; Coldingham, population 2424, fund £316, 2s. 9d.; Inverary, population 2061, fund £124; Jedburgh, population 4454, fund £631, 17s. 4d.; Kilninian, population 4064, fund £20; Hawick, 3688, fund £899, 14s.; Lismore and Appin, population 3407, fund, £34; Wilton, population 1500, fund £309, 17s. 11d.; Kilmartin, population 1453, fund £15; Kelso, 4408, fund £899, 5s.; Rothsay, 4970, fund £171, 3s. 7½d.; Morebattle, population 983, fund £306; Kilninver, 983, fund £22. These statements are given from the Appendix of the Supplementary Report.

35. Are there any circumstances connected with the different state of the population, in the districts you have contrasted, which could account for the smallness of relief given in the one case, and the amount of the rate in the other; is the one an agricultural district and the other a manufacturing one, or are there any other contrarieties which would account for the great disproportion?—There is no other circumstance I can assign than the mere existence in the one set of parishes, and non-existence in the other, of a compulsory provision. The counties where the method of assessment is most general are among the most agricultural in Scotland; on the other hand Campbelton is the most populous in Argyleshire, its population being 7807, and the fund only £141, 10s.; the employment of many of the people, too, is fishing, which is very precarious. I will conclude this list

of instances by mentioning another parish in Argyleshire, Kilchoman, where the population is 3131, fund £10.

36. Have you had any means of comparing the actual condition of the poor in those separate classes of parishes, or any of them, so as to enable you to state to the Committee in which of the two descriptions of parishes there is the greatest industry and wealth, and in which the physical and moral condition of the poor is the better?—I can say little on this subject from my own personal observation; I have a very vague recollection of Roxburghshire, where I was assistant for some months to a minister, about twenty-nine years ago; my impression certainly is, that in the unassessed county of Fife, where I was afterwards a clergyman for twelve years, the standard of enjoyment is fully as high as in Roxburghshire, and the relative affections seem to be in much more powerful exercise in the unassessed than in the assessed parishes, as also the kindness of neighbours to each other, and the spontaneous generosity of the rich to the poor: there is a great deal of relief going on in the unassessed parishes, perhaps as much in point of *matériel* as in the assessed, though not so much needed, from the unbroken habits of economy and industry among the people; the *morale* which accompanies the voluntary mode of relief tends to sweeten and cement the parochial society in the unassessed parishes. On the subject of the relative condition and character of the two sets of parishes, I shall, with the permission of the Committee, give a few extracts taken from the original communications of the Scottish clergy, upon which the Third Report of the Select Committee of 1818, and also the Supple-

mentary Report of the General Assembly, are founded. The first are a few instances from the county of Sutherland. In Wick the population is 5080 ; the fund £48, 6s. The minister says, ' There is no one of any description in this parish, or indeed in this county, supported wholly from the public fund ; a little help is all that is given ; for the rest, they must depend upon their own industry, the kindness of relations, or the liberality of the generous : entire support is unknown.' In Criech the population is 1969 ; the fund, £10, 19s. ' None supported wholly from the poor fund ; the pittance they receive from the fund would not support them one month in the year ; but they are supported by their friends and neighbours. In admitting a pauper on the poor roll, his moral character is minutely examined and considered in bestowing charity.' In Tongue the population is 1493 ; the fund, £12, 12s. ' None are wholly supported from the poor's fund in this parish, owing to the extreme smallness of our fund ; on the poor's roll the number at present is forty, to whom are given from 3s. to 5s. or 6s. from the poor's fund in a year, according to the urgency of their claims, and chiefly to buy shoes, or assist to buy them ; the great majority of the above do a little for their own maintenance, but are principally supported by the kindness of their relations, and the bounty of charitable neighbours often sent to their relief.' In Kilarnan the population is 1390 ; the fund £46, 10s. ' None on the poor's roll of my parish are supported wholly from the poor's fund, but live partly by their own industry, and when unable to work, are aided by their friends. There is one blind person in this parish ; there are four persons deaf and dumb : the

above objects are aided a little by the kirk-session, but supported chiefly by their own relatives.' In Kirkmichael Riolis the population is 1168; the fund £18, 14s. 'At his settlement, the incumbent found ninety-five names on the poor's roll; on making strict inquiry into their circumstances, in the course of two or three years, he found that most of them were not real objects of charity, but were put on the list by the influence of one or other of the twelve elders: to get free of this, he got an act of the kirk-session, ordaining that none should receive of the poor's fund but such as would sign an obligation to leave their all, after paying the expense of their last illness and interment, to the poor, unless they had parents or children, sisters or mothers, or such other relations or connexions as had been kind and munificent to them in their distress; by this act the number was reduced from ninety-five to thirty-six; there is one young man who has been confined to bed for several years by a universal palsy, supported by his parents and relations, excepting from 18s. to 25s. given annually by the congregation.' In Avoch, the population is 1560, and the fund £25, 10s. 6d. 'There are two persons blind, three deaf and dumb; the above objects are aided partly by the kirk-session, but supported chiefly by their own relatives.' In Nigg the population is 1349; the fund £16. 'The highest rate of relief granted is too small for the support of any individual; private charity commonly makes up the deficiency.' In Fearn the population is 1508, and the fund £19, 7s. 5d. 'They receive from 3s. to 7s. annually; the rate of allowance in Highland parishes is very frequently as small.' In Kincardine the population is 1666; the fund is

£9, 10s. 'Character is always considered, and the amount of his allowance fixed in proportion; and this is seriously impressed on the mind of a bad man.' In Tarbat the population is 1379; fund £33, 13s. 6d. 'Ten of this number cannot earn anything, but are assisted by their children and friends.' In Urray, the population is 2649; the fund £16, 8s. 'Five blind, three deaf and dumb, supported, partly, from the session fund, chiefly by relations and a benevolent public.' Kilmoreck, the population 2528; the fund £12, 12s. 'There are on the poor's roll of this parish, that can earn nothing for their maintenance, eight men and six women, and these are maintained by their charitable neighbours and the poor's fund; the highest sum given is 10s. a year.' In Alness the population is 1038; the fund £29, 8s. 'The people are uniformly sober and careful, and accumulate what they can lay by for future necessities.' Dingwall, the population 1500; the fund £902, 17s. 6d. 'There is no pauper on the roll who is entirely supported by the session; they either do a little for their own subsistence, or are in a great measure supported by individual charity.' I think these instances form a very fair representation of the general state of unassessed parishes.

37. Have you made any extracts of a similar character with respect to the state of the poor in the assessed parishes?—I am sorry that it did not occur to me to do so; but I will make such extracts and submit them to the Committee.

38. Can you inform the Committee, more particularly with respect to the existence and continuance of the private charity in the relief of distress, how that private charity exists in the assessed parishes,

as compared with the unassessed parishes?—My opportunities of observation have been very much confined to the unassessed parishes, with the exception of Glasgow, where I would not ascribe the whole difference to the assessment, on the one hand, and the want of assessment on the other ; for irrespective of this there is a difference between a town and a country population.

39. Are there not some parishes in which there are very considerable voluntary contributions, and in which there is a subsidiary fund in aid of the church-door collection, without reference to assessment?—I am aware of the existence of such a fund in several parishes.

40. Could you state what the state of the poor is in parishes of that description, more particularly with respect to the feelings of private charity, and the discharge of the obligations of benevolence one towards another?—I am not able to furnish the Committee with any statement upon that subject.

41. In the assessed parishes generally, has the disposition been to extend the amount of assessment?—I think very much so ; at the same time it is but fair to state that there are some remarkable instances of moderate expenditure, even in assessed parishes ; and if the Committee will allow me, I can give a few instances. In Longformacus the population is 444, the fund £40, 3s. 7½d. ; Eyemouth, the population 962, the fund £71, 19s. 11½d. ; Edwin, the population 1360, the fund £232, 11s. 9d. ; Selkirk, the population 2466, the fund £31 ; Melrose, the population 3132, the fund £270 ; Nenthorn, the population 398, the fund £24, 5s. 4d. ; in Legerwood, population 560, fund £43, 3s. 9d. ; Stair, 1454, fund £99, 4s. ; Martin,

614, fund £42, 15s. 10d. ; Abbey St. Bathans, 154, fund £5, 15s. ; Cranshaws, 186, fund £10, 18s. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. ; Preston and Buncle, 766, fund £40, 18s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

42. Can you inform the Committee what have been the causes which in those parishes have led to the moderation of the assessment and prevented the increase of such assessment?—They are quite intermingled with and contiguous to other parishes where the amount of the assessment is out of all proportion greater than theirs. Perhaps it may proceed from a later introduction of the assessment, though a more strenuous management could produce the whole difference. These instances, however, comprehend so very small a fraction of the parishes, that if due to superior management, we are entitled to infer it is such a management as in the average will not be realized, whereas in the unassessed parishes, where we have an equally moderate expenditure, we need no strenuousness of management. It appears to me that the assessment has operated as an artificial stimulant, and given a movement to the people in one direction, and that the strenuous management operates as a counteractive, which when strenuous enough, brings the people to a right medium state, as if by a compensation of errors. The ground upon which I prefer the system in unassessed to that in assessed parishes, is, that freed from both these errors, we remain in the same moderate state without the putting forth of any skill or any strenuousness whatever on the part of the administrative body. Granting that there is no natural necessity for a compulsory provision to the poor, the anomaly of a moderate expenditure in some assessed parishes might be easily accounted for. The want of this

necessity will generally be discoverable by strict investigation, so that even after a compulsory fund is established, by means of a very vigilant guardianship and scrutiny, the great majority of applications might be warded off, or a great number of the already admitted paupers may have their allowances either reduced or withdrawn. I do not wonder that when a strenuous administration is set up in any parish, we should hear of such marvellous abridgments as have been effected on the expenditure; but I do regret, when I hear these instances appealed to as examples of the innocence of the system. Such instances among the assessed parishes of Scotland, do not amount to one-tenth of the whole. They form too but an inconsiderable fraction among the parishes of England, proving that under the *average* management of parishes, or such management as is generally and ordinarily to be had, the system contains in it the mischievous principle of its own acceleration. It is not to be denied, that if we set up an unnatural stimulant on the one hand, and give a movement thereby in one direction, we may do much to neutralize the impulse by a counteractive of unnatural strength and violence in the other direction. But I should prefer a natural state of things, where the impulse had not been given, and so the counteraction has not been called for.

43. It is stated, in the Third Report of the General Assembly, that in almost all the country parishes which have come under their notice, where a regular assessment has been established, the wants of the poor and the extent of the assessments have gradually and progressively increased from their commencement; speaking generally, would your experience and

the facts that have come within your observation confirm that remark?—Completely so. There has been a good deal of literary controversy on the subject of the poor laws in Scotland, and great use has been made of the errors in the abstract subjoined to the Third Report, 1818, by those who contend for the principle of a compulsory provision, as if those errors completely disproved the principle and general spirit of that Report of your Select Committee. But, in point of fact, the principles and conclusions of that Report are equally well borne out by the Supplementary Report of the General Assembly, where the numerical abstracts are quite correct and have never been excepted against.

44. Have you the means of comparing the industry and wealth of the people in an unassessed with an assessed parish?—I cannot speak from actual observation, because I do not think it quite fair to compare Glasgow, where I have had a great deal of experience, with those country parishes where I have also had much experience.

45. You officiated as minister in a country parish in the county of Fife?—I did; I was twelve years a minister of Kilmany in that county.

46. What was the state of the fund for the relief of the poor in your parish in Fife?—Our annual expenditure, speaking of the average of those twelve years, was about £24, and the population 787. I might also mention, that I have a recollection of about £12 being given for some years to one remarkable case of distress, so that we had only for some time £12 a year for the expenses of the general pauperism of that parish.

47. Was there any effort made at any time during

your ministry in that parish to introduce the principle of assessment?—Not the least; the heritors sometimes offered me a supplemental voluntary sum, but I always disliked it; I said that the effect of this, if known to the parish, would be to excite a great deal more expectation than it could gratify, and I found the parish kept in a more wholesome state by the rich giving what they gave privately, and without coming ostensibly through the known and public organization of the kirk-session, so that I always discountenanced the tendency on the part of the heritors, who were abundantly liberal, to augment our regular session fund by any extraordinary contributions.

48. The funds for the relief of the poor in that parish were then provided exclusively by the kirk-session?—They were; we had a small capital of about £200 which afforded us so much interest; then we had our collection. A considerable part of the fund is expended upon small ecclesiastical matters, such as the payment of the session clerk, and the synod and presbytery clerks.

49. Were those charged upon the small annual fund?—They were.

50. Did the population of that parish augment during the time of your ministry?—It did not; it was pretty stationary during the time of my ministry, but it rather declined before that; the practice of throwing the country into large farms had obtained previous to my entering upon the ministry of that parish. The parish was almost exclusively agricultural, consisting of husbandmen and the servants of husbandmen, with a few country artificers, and some weavers.

51. Was the condition of the poor progressive or retrograding during those twelve years?—I was

sensible of no great difference in that respect ; the people, generally speaking, were in decent comfort ; but I beg it to be understood, that I do not ascribe this to any positive virtue in our public charity. I think the excellence of our system, when compared with that of England, is altogether of a negative kind. Our parochial charity, from the extreme moderation of its allowances, does not seduce our people from a due dependence on themselves, or to a neglect of their relative obligations. It is not the relief then administered by our kirk-sessions which keeps them comfortable. This is mainly owing to the operation of those principles which nature hath instituted for the prevention and alleviation of poverty. I might here mention, that I had occasion to publish my Kilmany expenditure about fifteen or sixteen years ago, when Mr. Rose honoured me with a letter of inquiry, and begged to know by what excellent management it was that I contrived to keep all the poor comfortable on so trifling a sum. I wrote back to him that I really was not conscious of putting forth any skill or any strenuousness in the matter, and that the excellence of our system did not consist in the excellent management, but wholly in the manageable nature of the subject, which was a population whose habits and whose expectations were accommodated to a state of things where a compulsory provision was altogether unknown.

52. Then you attribute the state of this parish rather to your laying aside all interference, than to any positive and affirmative acts ?—Decidedly so. I look upon a compulsory provision to be that which acts as a disturbing force upon certain principles and feelings, which, if left to their own undisturbed exer-

cise, would do more for the prevention and alleviation of poverty, than can be done by any legal or artificial system whatever.

53. During those twelve years, were there any peculiar visitations of distress or sickness, or any commercial vicissitudes, which affected the population of this parish ?—There was one instance of low wages, and I remember the heritors then came forth with an offer which I gave way to for once, of about £50, which was distributed over and above the sessional income. I had a feeling that it really was not necessary ; I did not think the parish by any means required it ; that is to say, I would much rather have preferred that they would, without the excitement of any great expectation in the parish, have distributed the sum of £50 in a private and unseen way.

54. Then do you consider that the ill effect produced by any system of assessment, or even by any extent of increased charity, is to be measured rather by the expectation excited on the part of the parishioners, than by the actual amount of money given ?—By the expectation, decidedly ; and I think it is one evil of public charity, that the poor, who are not very accurate arithmeticians, are apt to overrate the power of a public charity, so that the real relaxation of their habits not being proportional to the amount given, but being proportional to the amount expected, leaves them in greater misery than if no such public charity were instituted. I would state, as a kind of characteristic specimen of our Scottish peasantry, that I have at times offered a poor person five shillings as from the session, and that it has been firmly yet gratefully refused ; they said they were very much obliged to me, but they had not just come to that

yet, and that they could make a fend ; by which they meant they could make a shift. The feeling of reluctance to public charity is very strong, and forms one of our greatest moral defences against the extension of pauperism in Scotland. I may mention that there is not a more familiar spectacle in our cottages, than the grandfather harboured for life by his own married children, and remaining with them for years, the honoured inmate of the family. In fact, I have no recollection of a single instance, and I am sure it would have been branded as the most monstrous and most unnatural of all things, of the desertion of relatives by relatives.

55. During your experience in that parish, had you the means of knowing whether there was a good deal of private charity, independently of the mere charity and performance of duty by kindred, which relieved distress where such distress existed ?—Generally speaking, the people, save in a few instances, were in a remarkably good economical condition, arising, in the first place, from their own industry and economy, in the second place, from the affection of relatives, which went very far to supersede any ulterior resource ; but in the third place, there was never wanting to the full amount of the existing necessity a third resource, in the mutual kindness of neighbours ; insomuch, that I hold the fourth and last resource, or the kindness of rich to poor, to be least important of them all. It should be recollected in estimating the product of the kindness which obtains between neighbours, that they make up by the number of their contributions for the smallness of each individual offering. Still there were occasional calls upon the rich ; and on the whole, I found that on the strength of these four

principles, matters went on quite rightly and prosperously in the parish.

56. Were there in the parish any persons blind or lame, or insane, and by reason of that misfortune incapable of contributing to their own support ?—I have a recollection of one insane person, who perhaps for a year, or a year and a half, was placed in the Dundee Asylum.

57. What provision were the poor of the parish enabled to apply to in cases of sickness, for relief, for medicine or advice ?—There was no regular institution for the supply of medicines ; there is an infirmary in the immediate neighbourhood, and an asylum for lunatics.

58. Was there any deficiency felt in that parish, in case of sickness, in the want of medical aid or medicine ?—I am not sensible of there having been any deficiency at all.

59. How did the poor, if they required any medical assistance, obtain it ?—They find, in the first place, a ready and great resource in the aid of their neighbours and friends ; then the country surgeons are, in general, very moderate in their charges upon the poor. There is a strong habit of mutual kindness in cases of sickness, perhaps too much so ; for, on these occasions, they are apt to overcharge each other with attentions.

60. Was there any increase of population in the parish while you were there ?—I think while I was there it was almost stationary.

61. Do you know anything of it since ?—Very generally. I do pay the parish a few occasional visits ; but the pauperism is so insignificant a part of its concerns, that it has never once been a topic of conversation between me and its present minister.

62. Do you know whether there has been, in that parish, such an increase of population, as to diminish the wages of labour?—The truth is, my acquaintance with Fife has ceased for fifteen years, and I am scarcely able to reply to that question; but it is material to remark, that in Scotland the law of settlement does not so accumulate the people in any one parish as to make the wages of labour in it sensibly differ from those in the country at large.

63. In the assessed parishes now, is the condition of the peasantry as good or better than it was thirty years ago?—I am not able, from any personal observation of my own, to reply to that question.

64. In the unassessed parishes, do you think it is?—I do not think there has been any deterioration in the unassessed parishes.

65. Do you think they are better or worse off in their clothing, and the possession of the comforts of life, during the last thirty years?—I think there has been a rise in the standard of enjoyment amongst the Scotch peasantry in the last thirty years.

66. Is that the case also in the manufacturing population of the parishes to which you have alluded, where there are manufactures?—I should think they, notwithstanding the greater fluctuations to which they are exposed, participate, on the average, with the general population.

67. With respect to some of the parishes to which you have alluded, what are the habits of the working classes in those parishes, for instance, taking some of the parishes in which there are scarcely any assessments, is there much forethought and frugality among them?—I think a very great deal.

68. Are there any institutions for the purpose of

aiding those habits there ?—None in that particular parish.

69. For instance, in case of sickness, is there anything similar to the benefit societies in England ?—I am not aware of any ; it is likely there are some in the neighbouring towns. I may mention one institution to which I attached a great deal of importance ; it may look like rather a subtle influence, but I hold it to be of substantial operation. I instituted a society, which was supported by the general population, at the expense of one penny a week each, for the support of religious and philanthropic objects. I conceive that this had a most wholesome influence upon their economic condition ; because it raised them all to the high state and character of givers, and in that way it widened their moral distance from the condition of receivers. I think that by the institution of that society, I raised and strengthened the barrier in the way of their descent to a state of pauperism. I may also here mention, that in the generality of unassessed parishes, where the collections are kept entire, and have not been diminished by the influence of assessment, there is what I would call a most beautiful operation running along the whole margin of pauperism. It is nearly the universal practice of the peasantry in Scotland to contribute a little to the collection on Sundays ; the consequence of which is, that they are insensibly formed to the habit, and they feel themselves raised to the high condition of givers, having the same effect with that which I just now ascribed to the circumstance of their being associated with the support of a philanthropic society.

70. Are there any institutions, such as what are called Savings Banks, in any of those parishes ?—

Had I been as much acquainted with Savings Banks then as I am now, I should certainly have instituted one in the parish of Kilmany. They are, on the whole, multiplying in Scotland.

71. In what way do they generally deposit or invest their savings, whatever they may be ; is it in furniture, or in the purchase of a cow, or any thing of that sort ?—I would say, it is very usual for them to have a good stock of furniture, or a cow.

72. Is it usual for the peasantry in those unassessed parishes to possess a cow ?—It is not infrequent, but by no means universal. There has been an unfortunate change in the habit of the agricultural parishes. The farmers, instead of employing married servants, have a very general preference for the employment of unmarried servants ; the men live in a kind of out-house, which they call a bothy, and they are not so domesticated as they used to be with the farmer. There was a good old practice, very prevalent in Scotland fifty years ago, of the farmer assembling all his servants every night and having family worship, besides observing all the habits and all the decencies of family religion on the Sabbath. In this way there was a kind of domestic relation established between the farmer and his servants, and a very high moral influence attendant upon it.

73. Can you state in those parishes to which you have spoken, in which there is no assessment, what were the wages of the peasantry at any given period, for example, at the beginning of the century, and at any period since ?—The wages were paid a good deal in kind ; and I think I may say they averaged about a peck of meal in the day.

74. Are the wages, whether paid in kind or paid in

money, as good now, in proportion to their wants, in those unassessed parishes as they were in the beginning of the century ?—I am not acquainted with the present rate of wages in the unassessed parishes.

75. Generally speaking, are the wages in Scotland as good now, in proportion to the wants of the people, as they were forty years ago ?—I would not like to commit myself to any precise answer upon that matter ; but my belief is, that the people now have a greater command over the comforts of life than they had forty years ago.

76. Are you aware that the sum you have mentioned as paid for the assessments in those parishes which are the worst managed in Scotland, and where the abuses you have described have made the most advance, are about the same as the sums paid in the very best managed in the northern parts of England ?—I think it is very likely they may be about equal with those in contiguous parishes in the north of England.

77. Are the agricultural labourers in the unassessed parishes in general in the possession or occupation of land ?—Not generally. The produce of a cow is often allowed to them ; which cow belongs to the farmer, and is maintained upon the farm.

78. Had they gardens to their cottages ?—Very small gardens.

79. You have stated, that in your experience of that parish, there was rather a tendency to consolidate small farms into large ones ; had that system the effect of lowering the condition of the poor ?—I am not sensible of its having had any such effect. I have no doubt they would experience the inconvenience of a transition state. It has given rise to the erection of a great many country hamlets, which have

swollen into villages, and which are chiefly occupied by country artificers.

80. Have you found it produce any effect upon the practical demand for labour, or a consequent reduction of the rate of wages?—The transition took place previous to my connexion with the parish, so that I could not very well say.

81. In that parish were there any cases of exposure of children?—Not one within the compass of my recollection.

82. Were there any cases of illegitimacy which rendered any parochial relief necessary?—The cases of illegitimacy were very infrequent, and when they do occur, no relief is given.

83. Is child murder at all frequent?—I am not acquainted with a single instance of it in the county of Fife.

84. How do you account for the stationary state of the population in that parish in Fife?—I should ascribe it to the fact of the agriculture not requiring any additional hands; and the population, free to move wherever there is greater encouragement, accommodates itself to the demand there is for them.

85. You have stated that the habits of the people in those parishes are those of forethought and consideration; does that apply itself to the article of marriage as well as to other engagements into which the poor enter?—There is a remarkable contrast in this respect between one part of Scotland and another. I remember a habit that used to be in full operation, which may have declined a little, though far from being wholly extinct, that after the virtuous attachment was formed, and an engagement was entered into, there was often the delay of years occupied with

the labour of collecting what they used to call a providing, which was a most enormous mass of bed and table linen, generally a great deal more than was at all needful. It was a point of distinction, in fact, amongst the Scottish peasantry, to amass a preparation of this sort, which, on the day previous to the marriage, was exhibited to all the neighbours. This produced a very wholesome delay. I have been informed that this providential sort of anticipation was carried so far that in many instances the grave-clothes formed one article of this preparation.

86. Do the same habits of providing, and of forethought against expense, still continue to actuate the peasantry?—I think in country parishes that are unassessed the habit is in a great measure unbroken; it has now taken a different direction, partly from this circumstance, that the practice of preparing what they called home made cloth has been exchanged for the practice of purchasing from dealers. They find this cheaper, and there has been a gradual disappearance of the household manufacture.

87. Do not you think that the habit of forethought so exercised will have considerable effect on their subsequent conduct in after life?—Decidedly so. I consider it as a guarantee for their subsequent good conduct.

88. In what year did your connexion with Glasgow commence?—In 1815.

89. To what parish in Glasgow were you appointed?—To the Tron Church parish, where I remained four years; I was afterwards transferred to the newly erected parish of St. John's, where I remained other four years, from 1819 to 1823.

90. Will you state the number of parishes in

Glasgow, and the general system of the town management of the poor at the time you went there ?—When I went there, there were eight parishes ; there are now ten. The collections at the different church doors were thrown into one fund, under the administration of a body denominated the General Session. This General Session consisted of all the clergy and all the elders of the separate parishes in Glasgow. There was a distinction made between sessional poor and Town Hospital poor. The way in which the sessional poor were provided was, that out of the fund constituted by the separate collections from all the parishes, the General Session sent back to each parish the sum they thought right, according to their judgment of the state and the necessities of each parish. With that sum each separate session supported that class of poor called the sessional. If there was a felt pressure upon the sessional fund in any parish, then so many of its sessional paupers were transferred to the compulsory fund that was under the administration of the Town Hospital ; and the peculiarly aggravated cases were, without passing through the intermediate state of sessional pauperism, passed immediately to that institution for the more liberal or the entire support, which the kirk-session could not afford them. The Town Hospital fund is a fund raised by assessment.

91. Does the Town Hospital imply an establishment in which the poor were received, and relief given to them ?—Yes. The more helpless and aggravated cases were admitted into the house, and were called inmates ; the others not admitted were called out-pensioners on the Town Hospital.

92. Was the expense of maintaining the poor in

Glasgow matter of increase during the period of your residence there, taking the whole town together?—In 1803 the poor rate of Glasgow was £3940; in 1818, £11,864; in 1820, it was £13,120.

93. Can you state what the population of Glasgow was in those two years?—I have no other account to give of the population than is afforded by the Parliamentary table. In the year 1811 the population was 58,343; in the year 1821 the population was 73,665; I am speaking of Glasgow within the precincts of the city, exclusive of the two great suburbs that formed the parishes of the Gorbals and the Barony.

94. Was the system of administering relief at the time of your first settlement in Glasgow the same in all the parishes of the town, or did it differ?—It was the same in all the parishes.

95. Have you any observations to make to the Committee with respect to the condition of the first parish to which you were appointed, the Tron Church, at the time of your appointment, and during the period of your ministry?—I disliked very much the condition of the parish at the outset of my connexion with it, and withdrew altogether from any share in the management of its pauperism; I felt it my duty to do so. In the eyes of the population the minister stood connected, not merely with the administration of this compulsory fund, but with the administration of a great many such charities as we call mortifications in Scotland, which are endowments for indigence, left by benevolent citizens, and who generally constitute the clergy their trustees. Among the earliest movements I made through the families, I was very much surprised at the unexpected cordiality of my welcome, the people thronging about me, and requesting me to

enter their houses. I remember I could scarcely make my way to the bottom of a close in the Salt-market, I was so exceedingly thronged by the people ; but I soon perceived that this was in consequence of my imagined influence in the distribution of these charities ; and I certainly did feel a very great recoil, for it was so different from the principle upon which I had been received with cordiality in my country parish, where the topic of their temporal necessities was scarcely ever mentioned : I therefore resolved to dis sever myself from the administration of these charities altogether. I soon made the people understand that I only dealt in one article, that of Christian instruction ; and that if they chose to receive me upon this footing, I should be glad to visit them occasionally. I can vouch for it that the cordiality of the people was not only enhanced, but very much refined in its principle after this became the general understanding : that of the 10,000 entries which I have made at different times into the houses of the poor in Glasgow, I cannot recollect half-a-dozen instances in which I was not received with welcome. I thus stood aloof during those four years from the administration of all those charities, yet very desirous all the while of a parish where I would be suffered to proceed in my own way, and to manage them upon that system which I thought most conducive both to the morality and to the economic well-being of their families ; this I could not accomplish in my first situation from the way in which we stood implicated with a general system of management ; and I had no great heart to lend my aid to modifications and improvements upon a system which I felt to be radically and essentially evil. I believed that unless

there was an utter change of principle, it was impossible to proceed with any degree of comfort and prosperity, and therefore it was that I kept aloof altogether from the management of the Glasgow pauperism during the first four years.

96. Did the distribution of those charities, during the four years of your ministry in that parish, continue, although you withheld your co-operation in the management of them ?—There was enough of agency without me for the administration of these charities ; I saw that by every movement I made I was awakening a host of sordid mercenary feelings and expectations on the part of the poor, and I felt that this was not placing me on right vantage ground, for the purpose of doing them any moral or religious good.

97. In attending to the condition of that parish, during the four first years of your ministry, had you the means of observing whether those bequests and charities to which you have alluded produced in their distribution any real or permanent good in the condition of the poor ?—I have no doubt that, in as far as those charities were applicable to the relief of general indigence, they did mischief.

98. To what parish were you removed after you quitted the Tron parish ?—There was a new parish erected by the magistrates under the name of St. John's parish, in Glasgow, and they did me the honour of presenting me to that parish. I think it right to state, that my great inducement to the acceptance of that parish was, my hope thereby to obtain a separate and independent management of the poor, which I felt it extremely difficult to obtain in my former parish from the way in which we were dovetailed and implicated with a number of distinct

bodies : there was in the first place the General Session, which resisted the separation of my parish from the general system ; then I had to negotiate the matter with the magistrates ; thirdly, I was resisted by the Town Hospital ; lastly, I was complained of to the Presbytery of Glasgow ; by them the matter was referred to the General Assembly : so that the legal and political difficulties that stood in the way of the arrangement were not to be told ; they formed, in truth, all the difficulties of the problem, for after these were overcome, the natural difficulties turned out to be so many bugbears, and quite disappeared. When the offer of St. John's parish was tendered to me by the Lord Provost of Glasgow, I wrote him the following letter, which will explain to the Committee the footing on which I undertook the parish :—

‘ GLASGOW, *August 3rd*, 1819.

‘ MY LORD,—When I received the intimation of my appointment as minister of St. John's, it gave me sincere pleasure to be informed, at the same time, that a letter written by myself to Mr. Ewing was read to the magistrates and council previous to my election, as it gave me the flattering assurance that the leading objects adverted to in that letter met with the approbation of the honourable body over which your Lordship presides. In that letter I adverted to the wish I had long entertained, and which is publicly enough known by other channels, for a separate and independent management, on the part of my session, of the fund raised by collections at the church door, and with which fund I propose to take the management of all the existing sessional

poor within our bounds, and so to meet the new applications for relief, as never to add to the general burden of the city by the ordinary poor of the parish of St. John's. And I here beg it to be distinctly understood, that I do not consider the revenue of the kirk-session to be at all applicable to those extraordinary cases which are produced by any sudden and unlooked-for depression in the state of our manufactures ; nor, if ever there shall be a call for pecuniary aid on this particular ground, do I undertake to provide for it out of our ordinary means, but will either meet it by a parochial subscription, or by taking a full share of any such general measure as may be thought expedient under such an emergency. Your Lordship will not fail to observe, that if the new cases of ordinary pauperism accumulate upon us in the rate at which they have done formerly, they would soon overtake our present collections. And yet my confidence in a successful result is not at all founded on the expected magnitude of my future collections, but upon the care and attention with which the distribution of the fund will be conducted ; a care and an attention which I despair of ever being able to stimulate effectually till I obtain an arrangement by which my session shall be left to square its own separate expenditure by its own separate and peculiar resources. At the same time, I can also, with such an arrangement, stimulate more effectually than before the liberality of my congregation ; and with this twofold advantage, I am hopeful not merely of being able to overtake the whole pauperism of St. John's, but of leaving a large surplus applicable to other objects connected with the best interests of the population in that district of the city. What I pro-

pose to do with the surplus is, to apply it as we are able to the erection and endowment of parochial schools, for the purpose of meeting our people, not with gratuitous education, but with good education on the same terms at which it is had in country parishes. My reason for troubling your Lordship with this intimation is, that I require the sanction of the heritors of the parish ere I can allocate any part of the sum raised by collections in this way. Without this sanction, I shall make no attempt to stimulate the liberality of my congregation beyond what is barely necessary for the expenses of pauperism ; with this sanction I shall have the best of all arguments by which to stimulate the liberality of my hearers, and the care of my distributors, and (most important of all) the zealous co-operation even of the poorest among my people, who will easily be persuaded to observe a moderation in their demands, when they find it stands associated with a cause so generally dear to them as the education of their families. There is another object which I shall not press immediately, but which your Lordship will perceive to be as necessary for the protection of the other parishes of Glasgow as of my own, and that is, that the law of residence shall take effect between my parish and the other parishes of the city ; I am quite willing that every other parish shall have protection by this law from the ingress of my poor, in return for the protection of my parish from the ingress of theirs. It is practically the simplest of all things to put this into operation from the very outset ; but I mention it now chiefly with a view to be enabled to remind your Lordship, when it comes to be applied for afterwards, that it is not because of any unlooked-for

embarrassment that I make the application, but in pursuance of a right and necessary object which even now I have in full contemplation. I shall only conclude with assuring your Lordship, that nothing will give me greater pleasure than to transmit from time to time the state of our progress in the parish of St. John's respecting all the objects alluded to in this communication; and that I hold myself subject to the same inspection and control from you, as the heritors of my parish, which the law assigns to the heritors of other parishes. A deed of consent and approbation relative to the various points that have now been submitted through your Lordship to the magistrates and council, will very much oblige.—My Lord, Your Lordship's most obliged and obedient servant,
(Signed) THOMAS CHALMERS.'

I esteemed it peculiarly fortunate, that by the erection of this parish, I was transferred to a situation so very much to my mind, and not the less that it was the poorest parish in Glasgow.

99. Can you state what the population of it was, and what was the amount of assessment at the time of your appointment?—The population was upwards of 10,000, and was afterwards reduced to about 8000 by the erection of another parish in its neighbourhood, which other parish took a slice off mine; but the population of St. John's has risen to upwards of 10,000 again, being in the eastern extremity of Glasgow, where there happens to be a great deal of vacant ground and a great many new buildings of late.

100. Then the diminution of population to which you refer was a diminution of the area of the parish,

and the subsequent increase of the population was an augmentation of the numbers?—Exactly so.

101. What was the character of the population?—Exclusively manufacturing, with the exception of shopkeepers, and a few of the upper classes, amounting to about a dozen families.

102. What was the amount of money levied for the support of the poor in the parish of St. John's, at the time of your appointment?—There is no distinct sum raised for each separate parish in Glasgow; I speak at present as to the amount of the sessional poor, who at the time of my appointment cost £225 a year. With regard to the Town Hospital poor it was very difficult to ascertain the precise expenditure, consisting as it did of outlay both for inmates and out-pensioners, the latter of whom were perpetually changing their residence from one parish of Glasgow to another. I consider the most important circumstance to be, that St. John's, by certain *criteria*, could be demonstrated to be naturally the poorest parish in Glasgow, and with more than one-tenth of the population.

103. What system did you adopt upon your appointment for the future management of the poor in the parish of St. John's?—The collection at the time that I passed from the Tron Church parish to the parish of St. John's, was about £400 a year, and the expense of the sessional poor was £225 a year, so that the collection exceeded the expense. What I gave in return for this excess was, an obligation to send no more poor to the Town Hospital of Glasgow, so that with the dying out of the cases that were upon the compulsory fund, this portion of Glasgow would be completely cleared of its compulsory pauperism. I did not and could not foresee what future necessities

might arise for which I could now obtain no relief from the Town Hospital; I thought it, therefore, a very moderate and fair bargain, when for the surplus of £175 which I withdrew from the general fund, I undertook to send no more cases to the Town Hospital, so as eventually to relieve that institution of the burden of St. John's, with the disappearance of the old cases. I felt, however, that the sum of £400 in the hands of my elders, with an expenditure at the time of only £225 might induce a relaxation in the management of the poor, in which case the cost of the sessional pauperism might very soon have mounted up to £400 a year. To avoid this hazard, I succeeded in forming another body, a body of deacons, recognized in old time by the constitution of the Church of Scotland, though since fallen very much into desuetude. Beside my day congregation, which consisted chiefly of the higher classes from all the different parts of the city, to whom I looked for the higher collection, I instituted an evening congregation, and gave a preference for the seats to my parishioners, who thus formed a parochial congregation. Their collection amounted only to £80 in the year, consisting chiefly of half-pennies, contributed by many, at least of the evening hearers, though not all of them, because the practice of giving to the collection had fallen very much into desuetude among the lower classes in Glasgow. The elders were put in charge of the day collection, and out of it they relieved the existing sessional poor; that is, the sessional poor who were in being at the commencement of the scheme. The deacons were put in charge of the evening collection, and with it, it was their peculiar business to entertain all the new

applications, to treat them with kindness yet firmness, inquiring thoroughly into the circumstances and the claims of every applicant. There never was more patient and persevering inquiry exercised by any set of men than was exercised at the outset by my deacons. At first the result was quite uncertain, but I did anticipate that the deacons would be enabled, on the £80 a year, to meet the new applicants for a considerable time, during which the old pauperism, both hospital and sessional, would be dying away, after which we would get the parish of St. John's translated into the moderate economy of an unassessed Scottish parish, where the poor were maintained by voluntary collections without assessment.

104. What was the result of the system you have described, and how far were the objects you had in view realized?—The success of the system greatly outstripped my own anticipations. I continued with them four years: the whole number of new paupers admitted during these four years were twenty; of which number those admitted on the ground of general indigence were thirteen, and their annual expense was £35; the number admitted on the ground of extraordinary and hopeless disease was two, and their annual expense was £14, 16s.; the number admitted on the ground of that necessity which springs from crime was five, there being two illegitimate children, and three families of runaway husbands, whose annual expense amounted to £19, 10s. So that when I left St. John's, the annual expenditure of the new pauperism that had been formed was £66, 6s.

105. Can you state what the decrease of the whole

pauperism was in that interval, and how your relation stood with the Town Hospital funds at the close of your proceedings?—The decrease was so great that I felt myself warranted to do what I could not have ventured upon at the outset; I made an offer to the Town Hospital of relieving them of all their pauperism that they could fairly trace to the parish of St. John's at any former period; I took the whole of that pauperism upon the sessional fund, leaving the deacons to the exclusive management, as before, of the new cases, and leaving the elders to the management of the old pauperism, now augmented; because in the first instance they had only to do with the sessional, but now they also undertook the Town Hospital pauperism connected with St. John's. After all, I found that was not enough for the absorption of the sum raised by the day collection, and I confess that I had a twofold object in devising for it an additional topic of expenditure: I wished, in the first instance, to give such a direction to it as might conduce to the moral good of the population; and therefore I took away £500 from the accumulated sum now in the hands of the elders, and succeeded therewith in endowing a parish school; besides that the session charged themselves with £75 a year for salaries to three other teachers. My other object was, to prevent too great an accumulation of money, and for this purpose to provide a safe and salutary absorbent. The truth is, that a large capital in the hands of a kirk-session might produce, to a certain degree, the same mischief that the regular and ample ministrations of compulsory pauperism do.

106. Did you contemplate, amongst the benefits connected with the alteration of system, a different

and improved system of management, derived from the local nature of parochial arrangements, as compared with the central management of the General Session and the Town Hospital?—In one respect the old and the new managements are alike. It is the practice to divide each parish into districts, which districts are called proportions. I divided my own parish into twenty-five proportions, and assigned a proportion to each deacon. When I had the full number of deacons, which was not always the case, each had the management of a population of about 400.

107. Was not the principle of that management local management; whereas the principle of the former system was rather general superintendence, as connected with the entire town?—Yes, in as far as the administration of the Town Hospital fund was concerned. And even under the old sessional management, they had not the full benefit of the local principle; which can only be secured by a local distribution emanating not from a general fund, but out of the local means.

108. Do you attach great importance to that distinction of principle between a local administration and a more central and general administration?—I attach the greatest importance to it.

109. Did you find it difficult to obtain the co-operation of your parishioners in filling the office of deacons?—Those deacons, generally speaking, were not parishioners; I would have preferred their being so, but ours was the most plebeian parish in Glasgow, and there were very few of that class to whom I could have confided the administration of the poor's fund; but I found no difficulty in obtaining the requisite agency from other parts of the city.

110. What effect did you find to be produced by your alteration of system upon the habits of the poor within the parish?—They were certainly not in a worse economic condition in consequence of the change of system than the other parishes of Glasgow; and seeing that the expenditure was so much more moderate, the only inference is, that there must have been a compensation for the smallness of the parochial allowance from some other quarters; and I can think of no other sources out of which that compensation could come, than such as would contribute very much both to the comfort and to the character of the population. In the first instance, there must have been a certain stimulus to their own industry and economy, when loosened from their dependence upon the large compulsory fund. In the second instance, there must have been an increased aid and support from relatives to each other. In the third, there must have been an increased kindness amongst the poor in the contiguous families of that neighbourhood; that I consider a very important resource; and the last, which I consider as comparatively unimportant, and of which I did not avail myself during all the four years of my connexion with St. John's in more than twelve instances, that I can recollect, must have been a stimulated benevolence on the part of the more wealthy to the poorer classes.

111. Are you then of opinion, that there was not more of unrelieved distress under your improved system at St. John's, than there had been when the expenditure for the poor had been so much larger?—I am quite of opinion that there was much less, because in the four sources of relief just mentioned there must

have been greatly more than an over-passing compensation for all that had been withdrawn from them in the shape of public charity.

112. Were you able to trace, in any instances, the action of this principle of compensation in the private relief given as compared with what would have been the relief given under a system of parochial assessment?—I never, during my whole experience in Glasgow, knew a single instance of distress which was not followed up by the most timely forthgoings of aid and of sympathy from the neighbours; I could state a number of instances to that effect. I remember going into one of the deepest and most wretched recesses in all Glasgow, where a very appalling case of distress met my observation; that of a widow, whose two grown-up children had died within a day or two of each other. I remember distinctly seeing both their corpses on the same table; it was in my own parish. I was quite sure that such a case could not escape the observation of neighbours; I always liked to see what amount of kindness came spontaneously forth upon such occasions, and I was very much gratified to learn, a few days after, that the immediate neighbours occupying that little alley or court laid together their little contributions, and got her completely over her Martinmas difficulties. I never found it otherwise, though I have often distinctly observed, that whenever there was ostensible relief obtruded upon the eyes of the population they did feel themselves discharged, from a responsibility for each other's wants, and released from the duty of being one another's keepers; and this particular case of distress met the observation of the Female Society at Glasgow, which society bears upon the general popula-

tion, and with a revenue of some hundreds a year, from which it can afford very little in each individual instance, besides the impossibility of having that minute and thorough acquaintance with the cases that obtains under a local management. I remember having heard that a lady, an agent of that society, went up stairs to relieve this widow, and gave all that the Female Society empowered her to give, which was just 5s. The people observing this movement felt that the poor woman was in sufficient hands, and that they were now discharged from all further responsibility. So that the opening of this ostensible source of relief closed up far more effectual sources, that I am sure would never have failed her.

113. Was this a solitary instance, or were there others that would lead to the support of the general conclusion that might be derivable from the case you have stated ?—There are several such instances which I put upon record, and I think I could do more justice perhaps to the subject, if I may be permitted to read one or two of them : ‘The first case that occurs to us, is that of a weaver, who, though he had 6d. a day as a pension, was certainly put into circumstances of difficulty, when two winters ago, in a season of great depression, the typhus fever made its deadly inroads upon his household. His distress was in the highest degree striking and noticeable ; and it may therefore look strange that no sessional movement was made towards the relief of so afflicted a family. Our confidence was in the sympathies and kind offices of the immediate neighbourhood ; and we felt quite assured that any interference of ours might have checked or superseded these to such a degree as would have intercepted more of aid than is ever granted by the

most liberal and wealthiest of all our public institutions. An outcry, however, was raised against us, and we felt compelled, for our own vindication, to investigate as far as we could the amount of supplies that had been rendered, and actually found that it exceeded at least ten times the whole sum that would have been allowed in the given circumstances out of the fund raised by assessment. It reconciled us the more to our new system, when given to understand, that the most liberal of all the benefactions was called forth by the simple information, that nothing had been done by any of the legal or parochial charities : nor did we meet with any thing more instructive in the course of those inquiries, than the obvious feeling of each contributor, that all he had given was so very insignificant. And it is just so, that the power of individual benevolence is greatly underrated ; each is aware how incommensurate his own offering is to the necessity in question, and would therefore desiderate or demand a public administration of relief, else it is feared that nothing adequate has been done. He never thinks of that arithmetic by which it can be computed that all the private offerings of himself and others far outweigh that relief which, had it issued from the exchequer of a session or an almshouse, would have arrested those numerous calls of beneficence that are sure to flow in upon every case of visible destitution or distress, from the surrounding vicinity.' There was a case that comes vividly home to my own recollection, that of a mother and daughter, both of whom were afflicted with cancer ; I said to one of my agents that we really must interfere in this. The agent, who was a very enlightened and sensible person, and taught a

Sabbath-school in the place, replied, 'I would certainly have asked the session to have interfered, but I do not like to arrest a very beautiful process that is now going on, and by which the most timely supplies of aid and service are now pouring into the household.' I did not want to deprive the neighbours of the opportunity of exercising their kind affections when they were so willing to do it; I was in the habit of visiting them occasionally, but the topic of their temporal distress was never obtruded by them upon me, and never once introduced by me to them; and I was perfectly assured that everything was going on rightly, through the mere workings of the natural process, left undisturbed by the operation of a public and proclaimed charity. The case was this: 'A mother and daughter, the sole occupiers of a single apartment, were both afflicted with cancer, for which the one had to undergo an operation, while the other was so far gone as to be irrecoverable. A case so impressive as this required only to be known that it might be met and provided for: and, on the first warning of its necessity, a subscription could easily have been raised, out of the unforced liberalities of those who had been attracted from a distance, by the mere report of the circumstance having made its natural progress to their ears, and what then was it that superseded the necessity of such a measure? The exuberant and as yet untired kindness of those who were near, and whose willing contributions both of food, and of service, and of cordials, had lighted up a moral sunshine in this habitation of distress. Were it right that any legal charity whatever should arrest a process so beautiful? Were it even right that the interference of the wealthier at a distance should lay

a freezing interdict on the play of those lesser streams, which circulate around the abode of penury and pain? We want not to exonerate the rich from their full share in the burden of this world's philanthropy; but it is delightful to think, that while, with their mightier gifts, an educational apparatus could be reared for good Christian tuition to the people, and good scholarship to their families, and so a barrier be set up against the profligacy of cities, there is meanwhile a spirit and a capability among the poor wherewith it is easy to ward off the scarcely inferior mischief of a corrupt and degrading pauperism.' The history of this case is, that the mother died first, and the daughter died in about a year and a half after the commencement of my acquaintance with them, and I told the person who stood on as a kind of observer, not to allow these people to suffer from want, and she said, she would certainly make a communication the moment she found it necessary; but the conduct of the immediate neighbourhood superseded the necessity of any exertion whatever in behalf of those people during those eighteen months, at the end of which we were called upon to take part in an easy subscription for the expenses of the funeral. That was a case which, had it been brought before the Town Hospital, would have superseded and arrested this process of kindness among the immediate neighbours.

'The next matter that is suggested to our remembrance, is that of an accidental visit to an old woman, and of the information she gave relative to the kindness of her next door neighbour, in whose presence she told that she had received a dinner from her every day during the preceding month. Was it wrong to

encourage and applaud this liberality, to assure the humble donor that she had been doing more for the object of her kindness than the wealthiest session of the city would have awarded her; and that were it not for the mutual kindness of the people among themselves, it were utterly impossible to carry on the management of the poor with any degree of comfort or efficacy? Is it not right that the people should be taught the importance of their own generosity, and does not the free and undisturbed exercise of this virtue add to the amount of parochial happiness, as well as to the amount of parochial morality?'

'A very fine example of the natural sufficiency that there is among the people under even the most trying of domestic reverses, took place a few years anterior to our connexion with St. John's. A family of six lost both parents by death; there were three children unable to provide for themselves, and the other three were earning wages. On an impression that they were not able to maintain themselves, application was made by them to their elder for the admittance of the three youngest into the Town Hospital, where, at the average of indoor pensioners, their maintenance would have cost at least £20 a year. He remonstrated with them on the evil of thus breaking up the family; on the duty of the older to see after the education and subsistence of the younger branches; and on the disgrace it would bring to them, by consigning their younger brothers and sisters to pauperism. He assured them that they would find comparatively little difference in the sum which it required to maintain them when they all remained together, and offered them a small quarterly allowance so long as they should feel it necessary, would

they try the experiment of keeping together, and helping on each other to the best of their ability. They gave way to this right moral suasion, and application for the stipulated quarterly sum was only made twice. Thus, by a trifling expenditure, a sum at least fifty-fold was saved to the Town Hospital. But the worth of such management to the habit and condition of the family cannot be estimated in gold. Who is there that does not applaud the advice, and rejoice in the ultimate effect of it? We could hold no sympathy either with the heart or understanding of him who should censure such a style of proceeding; and our conceptions lie in an inverse proportion from his altogether of the good and the better and the best, in the treatment of human nature.'

'An aged and infirm female was ordered away from her tenement by its proprietor, and on inquiry it was found that there did not exist one earthly relative with whom she could be lodged. The patent way in such circumstances would have been to pass her to the Town Hospital, where she might have been received as one of the inmates. On making a round, however, amongst a few of the likeliest households in the vicinity, it was soon ascertained, that an old woman, the solitary occupier of a humble apartment, would willingly admit her to a place at her fireside, and the shelter of her roof, for the very moderate allowance of sixpence a week. Will any one say that the very comfort of this poor and interesting person was not more effectually consulted by an arrangement that served to domesticate her in a neighbourhood where she still found a harbour and a home, on the field of general society, than if transported thence, she had been doomed to breathe out the remainder

of her days in the cheerless atmosphere and among the unhappy exiles of a poorhouse ? ’

114. Were there any Irish families amongst your parishioners in St. John’s ?—A good many.

115. What proportion did they bear to the population of your parish ?—I can state the proportion that they bear to the expense of the eastern district of the parish at present, where the Irish paupers cost St. John’s at present more than one-third of the whole expense. I made an attempt to obtain the precise number of Irish families in the parish, but I have not yet received any answer.

116. Did you find them, under that kind treatment you have described, as amicable in their conduct, and as orderly as the Scotch families ?—As amicable, certainly ; but in respect of order and sobriety, there is a marked distinction between the Scotch and the Irish families. At the same time, although there was a great deal said about the burthen of the Irish poor, I think, that under a purely gratuitous system, that, and every other burthen, might be made indefinitely small.

117. Did you perceive, as one of the effects of the altered system, improved habits on the part of the more wealthy classes ?—I think there must have been, to a certain degree, an improved habit of liberality. On looking from a distance to the poor, or looking upon them *en masse*, we are very apt to have an exaggerated impression of their state of discomfort, which is very much mitigated by a nearer approach to their families.

118. Was there a very great degree of labour on your part, or on the part of your deacons, required for carrying this system of management into effect ?—I think I can give the Committee complete information upon that question, and I am glad it has been put,

because it is a question relative to which there exists a very great degree of misconception, as if the plan was not imitable in other parishes, from the immense agency required. In point of fact, we laboured under a very inconvenient press of applications at the outset of our proceedings, because the understanding of the population was, that we had found out a new method of supplying the poor, which they conceived, of course, was just some extraordinary contrivance for pouring abundance into the lap of every family. This produced rather an inconvenient reaction at the outset, and there was a great and almost menacing press of applications ; the deacons were therefore a good deal burdened with the business of inquiry at the first, but when the poor found that the object of that inquiry was to ascertain what their natural resources were, and that no public relief was given unless they could demonstrate that their case was worse than the case of a pauper relieved and supplied in other parishes, then they simply ceased to apply ; they were thrown back upon their own natural resources, and felt the sufficiency of them in the way which I have already mentioned ; and so our deacons, instead of being oppressed by the burden and the strenuousness of their management, wrought themselves, in a very few months, into the condition of so many sinecurists, who at length had little or nothing to do ; the people ceased to apply, and in the course of a few weeks or months, we fell down to one-fifth of the applications to which we were exposed under the old system. I consider as particularly valuable the answers of these practical and experimental men to certain queries which I circulated amongst them before I left Glasgow : I

wished to know particularly the local and intimate experience of each of the deacons relative to the families committed to his charge, and I thought that in that way, more effectually than in any other, I could fully expose the interior mechanism, as it were, of the operations that went on under the new system of pauperism. With the permission of the Committee I will first read the questions contained in the circulars which I addressed to them ; they were as follow :—

‘ 1. Of what proportion is it in St. John’s parish that you are deacon ?

‘ 2. What is its population, as nearly as you can infer from your last survey ?

‘ 3. How many paupers belong to it that are upon the deacons’ fund ?

‘ 4. How many applications may you have for parochial relief monthly or quarterly, as near as you can remember ?

‘ 5. What time may the business of attending to these applications, and the necessary inquiries that you had to make in consequence of them, have cost you upon the whole ?

‘ 6. Are the applications more or less frequent since you entered upon your office ?

‘ 7. Could you state how much time you are required to sacrifice, per week or per month, in making the requisite investigations that you are actually called to ?

‘ 8. Do you think that a man in ordinary business would find the task of meeting the pauperism of such a district as yours so laborious as to put him to any sensible inconvenience ?

‘ 9. Will you have the goodness to state any circumstances connected with your management that you

think might elucidate the nature of the duties or attentions that you have had to discharge ? ’

I will now beg leave to read the Committee a few selected passages from some of the answers of the deacons, as forming the most valuable experimental exhibition of the real state of the question that I know of any where.

One of the deacons says, ‘ The latest survey was taken about a month ago, and from it I observe that this proportion contains 335 inhabitants. There is not at present a single pauper in this proportion upon the deacons’ fund ; nor has there occurred either an occasional or permanent case, requiring assistance from this fund, since I received the charge of it in the month of May, 1822. The number of applications for relief in this proportion has been very few during the last twelve months, not amounting to the best of my recollection to more than seven, or about an average, one every two months. Upon a review of these cases, I compute that I may have bestowed upon them about sixteen hours in the whole, or about a quarter of an hour per week at the utmost. All those applications for relief to which I have alluded occurred during the first six months after accepting office ; which leaves nine months during which I have had not a single application for parish relief. Before I could be prevailed upon to take charge of this proportion, I imagined that, in consequence of my professional avocations, it would be quite impossible for me to accomplish such an object ; but I was very much astonished to find, after a few months’ trial, how simple a matter it was, and how easily managed ; indeed, so light and pleasant did the duty seem, that I thought if all the other proportions were equally

manageable, I could take upon me to manage the whole parish, and attend to my business besides. I am of opinion, that the first thing necessary to the proper discharge of the office which I hold, is to get immediately acquainted with every house and family in the proportion, in order to check any imposition which may otherwise be practised, and also to facilitate the investigation of every case which may occur.'

Another deacon says, 'Population, 466 : not one pauper at present : have one application every five months nearly, and have had none for six months and a half past. If the question as to the time necessary for doing the work of a deacon refer merely to the time required to investigate the cases, I would say an hour in five months ; but if to attendance at the examination of schools, making up a list of population, attending at the church for the evening collection, going to the several houses about the church seats, etc., then the time must be very considerably greater ; probably, from the calculation made in a general way from memory, about one hour and a quarter per month. There would be no sensible inconvenience incurred by any man from being a deacon, if his duties are solely confined to the pauperism. Although I have acted as a deacon for about twenty-seven months, yet the cases have been so very few, that my experience has been but very limited, and consequently I am not able, I think, to suggest any thing which is likely to be useful ; I may, however, just remark, that I think the two most requisite qualities in a deacon are kindness and firmness ; kindness, that the people may be perfectly persuaded he is endeavouring to do every thing for their good ; firmness, that he may be able to resist pathetic but ill-grounded applica-

tions for relief. If he also possesses some knowledge of the habits and character of the poor he will be more likely to be able to be of service to them, and will run less risk of being imposed upon.'

Another deacon says, 'In order to maintain or produce a right feeling in a district, I conceive it necessary, that the deacon should make himself acquainted with all its families, endeavouring, especially, to obtain an accurate knowledge of the circumstances of those who seem likely to become applicants; and, having arrived at this knowledge, he has reached the most advantageous ground for his subsequent operations. Does he meet with a genuine case of distress, he may invite the sympathy and private charity of the neighbours towards it, and thereby provide for the sufferers in a far more ample manner than by a parish contribution. A case in my district of a poor woman, long under a lingering illness, and which terminated in her death, might be adduced to show how much even of comfort sometimes arises out of private charity. This person was unable, for a considerable time, to maintain herself by her own earnings, and yet no desire was manifested for parish aid; the neighbours, and those who had heard of her situation, came forward in her behalf, so that she appeared to stand in need of nothing that was necessary.'

Another deacon, in answer, says, 'You are aware the population of this proportion consists of very poor people; there is only one family above the rank of operatives: the district to which the above testimony relates is about the poorest in Glasgow. I offer the following very important notice, in regard to this district, from a former deacon who had the charge of

it, but was obliged to quit it upon leaving town. Though foreign to our subject, I may state that I have received £2, 2s. out of the proportion to assist an outfit of emigrants to Quebec, and £5 or £6 from among the very poorest of them for Bible and Missionary Societies; these sums tend to prove that any of our proportions might be supported from its own resources.'

Another deacon says, 'The time necessary is so trifling as is not worthy of being noticed, not twenty hours per annum; the applications considerably less than at first; say one to four or five. In reply to your eighth query, I have to say none whatever; the duties are simple, few in number, and easily overtaken; good-will and affectionate interest in the affairs of the poor, with minute and persevering inquiry in every case, to prevent imposition, will enable the deacon almost to eradicate pauperism from his district; the above district, I may state, as being a very noticeable feature in Glasgow, includes the whole of Barrack-street.'

Another deacon says, 'In consequence of the small number of applications, the time required for inquiry has been very trifling; the applications are less frequent; I consider a person would sustain no sensible inconvenience from attending to the inquiry necessary for investigating the applications from this proportion.'

Another deacon says, 'I have had not exceeding one application quarterly, on an average of the last two years, and spent perhaps an hour on each application. The applications are much less frequent than at the outset; it would most certainly not in the smallest degree be inconvenient for a man in business

to fulfil the duties of a deacon ; when no less than three proportions were under my charge, and the applications numerous in proportion to what they are now, then they might have been inconvenient to a man much engrossed in business, but I could not even then give the necessary duties the appellation of laborious. I cannot offer any thing to elucidate the nature of the duties attached to the office of deacon, they are of so simple a nature ; I may, however, say, that my practical experience has proved, to my entire satisfaction, that strict investigation of the applicant's situation, and the treating of the case according to its circumstances, is all that is wanting to diminish the number of applications.'

Another deacon says, 'It deserves to be remarked here, that though the people are poor and the deacon is at hand, yet that his vicinity does not expose him to any weight or overwhelming urgency of applications. This holds true also of the case of No. 9, proving that for the right management of pauperism, it is not at all necessary to flee the applications, but resolutely, and we may add withal, kindly and humanely to canvass them.'

Another deacon states, 'I am deacon of a proportion, whose population, from last survey, is 284 : there are no paupers on either the deacons' fund or on the session within the proportion.--*N.B.* I think it proper to add, that though this is the case, the proportion is one of the poorest in all St. John's parish, only three families of the population being above the rank of labourers or journeymen mechanics.' The same deacon further says : 'The deacon who has favoured me with the above deposition is also a local Sabbath-school teacher, in a part of the city now out of my parish ; the district

which belongs to him, in this latter capacity, comprising two closes in the Saltmarket ; I have great value for the assurance that he has often made to me verbally, that he is persuaded how, within the limits of this little territory, there is enough both of ability and good-will to provide for all the indigence that is to be found ; though it really belongs to one of the most indigent quarters in the whole city.'

Another deacon says, 'I am convinced that the immediate readiness of the deacons at all times to procure employment for such as may find any difficulty, serves as a check against the lazy and indolent from applying for aid : and the strict scrutiny adopted in all cases of whatever nature, operates as a preventive in many instances against individuals, or their friends for them, from begging relief from the parish funds ; the experience of nearly four years of the charge of the poorest proportion of the parish, has fully convinced me of the entire practicability of the system now adopted for the management of the poor of St. John's ; and I have just to repeat, that I am certain that I should find it no task whatever to meet the pauperism of double the number contained in this district ; nor would the attention that might be required put me to any sensible inconvenience.'

Another deacon says, 'That the applications were considerably more numerous during the first year I entered upon the office than they can have been since. That the task of meeting the pauperism of such a proportion would not put a man in ordinary business to any sensible inconvenience.'

Another deacon says, 'I have always, when I had it in my power, given work to the poor in the place of aliment, with which in general they were pleased. I

have in two instances, where a husband left his wife and family,¹ refused them any aid, and the consequence was, that the husband in the one instance came back to his family, and in the other, that the family found out the husband. Had the court of deacons interfered in this case, and given support to the family, apparently destitute of a husband and father, we should never have seen or heard any thing of the husband ; but the refusal of all aid from the court of deacons was the only cause, I am fully persuaded, of bringing the family together.'

Another deacon says, ' Since the commencement of our operations in St. John's parish, the time occupied by me in attending to and investigating the applications may be about twenty-four hours, two-thirds of which were spent during the first twelve months. In the course of the second year, the other eight hours were requisite, and latterly the business has become quite a sinecure, as far as labour is concerned. In attending to cases in my own district, and investigating along with other deacons, in this I may have spent about six hours in the last twelve months ; and as I consider this about the average time necessary to the other deacons, it is my opinion, that a man in ordinary business would be put to no sensible inconvenience in attending to the pauperism of any of our districts.' He further says, ' I have other three districts in my parish, one of which is exempted almost from its having paupers, and the other two of which are at present without deacons, and have been placed under the temporary charge of those to whom they do not properly belong.' ' I sincerely hope from the exposé which has now been given of the perfect facility, and I may add, pleasure attendant on the occupation, that

they will not long remain vacant. The gentlemen will at length find that the pauperism is a mere bagatelle ; but still for the sake of that refining and tranquillizing effect which the mere friendly attentions of the upper classes have on the working classes of society, I should like to see a representative of our system in every proportion of the parish. He may so manage as at length to have nought whatever to do with the distribution of public alms ; but he may stimulate the cause of education ; he may give direction to the habit of economy ; he may do a thousand nameless offices of kindness ; he may evince good-will in a variety of ways ; he may even, without any expenditure of money, diffuse a moral atmosphere that will soften and humanize even the most hard-favoured of his people. And as the fruit of those very light and simple attentions which are here recorded, he will at length feel that he has chalked out for himself a village in the heart of the city wilderness, whose inhabitants compose a very grateful and manageable family.'

119. What was the condition of Glasgow, and more particularly in your parish of St. John, during the years to which your experience more particularly refers ?—The condition of Glasgow was perhaps the worst that had ever occurred ; it was at the time that radicalism was at its height, and this radicalism had taken the unfortunate and alarming direction of insisting upon the English law of parochial aid being introduced and acted upon all over the city. I was waited upon by a deputation from a very large associated body of operatives, and they presented a petition for the establishment of parochial aid all over Glasgow. I was enabled to meet it in this way.

I observed that I had extricated myself from the general management of Glasgow, and that rather than give an answer, therefore, to the representatives of a general associated body representing the whole town, I would confer with representatives from those members of the body who belonged to the parish of St. John, and that I had no doubt I would be enabled to give a satisfactory answer to their application; the only answer I gave was, that I was quite sure that our deacons met every specific application in a kind and patient manner, and that if there was any specific case of distress amongst them I was quite sure that it would be so met. The truth is, that it was the mere working of a legal or political spirit which actuated this movement; and when met by a challenge, that each should expose his personal wants, there was felt the good wholesome Scotch aversion to come under any thing like the cognizance or surveillance of the kirk-session, and so I heard no more of it.

120. Was there considerable distress prevailing amongst the manufacturers, and a reduction in the rate of wages, and the demand for labour?—A very considerable distress; in consequence of which there was a general subscription raised, of which subscription our people shared, agreeably to the terms of the letter I addressed to the Lord Provost.

121. Can you state what proportion of the parish of St. John received of that general subscription?—I can confidently say that it was a much smaller proportion than the rest of Glasgow received.

122. Was the smallness of that proportion owing to the less necessity there was for extraordinary relief in your parish?—I think it was owing very much to the business of requisite inquiry being confided to our

deacons, who were so very expert in it, that all cases of unworthy application were intercepted.

123. Can you state whether, under the operation of the system which you have described to have been introduced and practised in the parish of St. John, any considerable reduction took place in the amount of assessment, and in the number of persons receiving relief?—The whole of the assessment for St. John's was cleared away. In as far as the general assessment for the city was concerned, there was a considerable reduction at first, and which reduction was explained by those who were not friendly to the system on principles altogether different from any relief that had been rendered, in consequence of the withdrawal of all new pauperism from the parish of St. John.

124. Do you suppose that the system pursued at St. John's might have had the effect of banishing paupers from that parish and throwing them upon other parts of the city of Glasgow?—That was certainly the imagination at one time; but we produced quite satisfactory evidence of the interchange of paupers between St. John's and the other parishes of Glasgow being against our parish. I can state in numbers what importation of paupers we received from the other parishes, and what number of paupers left us during the time of my connexion with St. John's. The egress of our poor to other parishes amounted to fifteen, the ingress from other parishes amounted to twenty-nine in four years. Since I have left St. John's, there was only an account taken of the egress and ingress from the western districts of the parish, comprehending about one-half of the poor. The egress from the western district between September, 1819, and September, 1829, was thirty-six;

the ingress fifty-four, so that upon the whole the balance has been against us.

125. Can you state whether there has been any reduction in the expense of assessment in the other parts of Glasgow, which was concurrent with the entire extinction of the assessment in the parish of St. John?—There was first a reduction, and then after that an increase. I do not ascribe much influence either in the one way or the other to the success of the experiment in St. John's, because, along with the relief that our parish gave to the general assessment, there might be insensibly, and without reflection on any body of men, a slight relaxation on the part of the management of the Town Hospital; and it is very easy from that cause alone to account for the creation of as much additional pauperism in the other parishes as would compensate the extinction of pauperism in the parish of St. John. In point of fact, however, I believe the management by the directors of the Town Hospital to be as good as under the system is at all possible. I have never reflected against their management, but against that principle of a compulsory provision, the mischief of which no management can neutralize.

126. Have you been able to trace the condition of the parish of St. John subsequently to your removal from thence?—I have had correspondence with the present managers of St. John's parish within these few weeks, from which I am enabled to give the Committee a precise statement of the condition of the pauperism there at this moment. The whole annual expense of St. John's pauperism, in September, 1829, which is the time at which they make up their accounts, was £384, 17s. 7d.

127. Was that sum raised by assessment ?—Not by assessment ; the object of my experiment was to conduct the parish of St. John back again to the same mode of relieving the poor which obtains in the unassessed parishes of Scotland ; and this has been kept up from 1819, or ten years ago, during all which time St. John's has been wholly dissevered from the Town Hospital, and from any benefit of the fund raised by assessment ; I may here except a little occasional aid from the hospital surgeons, a department of public charity that might with safety be continued.

128. Then the Committee are to understand that the system laid down by you has been persevered in up to the present moment in the parish of St. John ?—It has ; of this £384, 17s. 6d., the expense for lunatics is £34, 17s. 9d., and the expense for orphans and deserted children is £117, 8s. Abstracting these two sums, there remains £232 for the general indigence in St. John's parish.

129. Are those lunatics supported in a parochial establishment, or in the general establishment of Glasgow ?—They are sent to the Lunatic Asylum, but the parish has to pay for them. It was conceived, when I left Glasgow, that I was turning my back upon my own system, and that in fact it was because of the disappointment I felt in regard to its success. Such being the imagination, the most essential service I could render to the general cause was to leave Glasgow altogether. Under the guise of a compliment to myself, the true principle of the success upon which that experiment hinged was altogether misunderstood. It was ascribed to a preternatural energy on my part, whereas a plan is worth nothing unless it succeeds

with ordinary instruments operating upon ordinary materials, so as quietly to prosper upon its own principles. I should like on this subject to repeat an illustration that I have often employed in argument, which, though rather homely, is, I think, an effective one. I have sometimes imagined a diseased excrescence upon a man's face connected with his habit of drinking port wine, and that he had been under a council of physicians for years, who had managed in a variety of ways, but that the disease only got worse: suppose another physician discovers the real connexion between the excrescence and its cause, he has, perhaps, infinite trouble and pains in the work of breaking up the old council of physicians, and at length gets alongside of his patient, after which he has nothing to do but to lay a firm interdict on the further use of port wine, after which the excrescence subsides, not by any further care or strenuousness on his part, but in virtue of the *vis medicatrix* in the body natural. Now, that was precisely my experience in the parish of St. John's; it was under a very complex management, and the whole of my difficulties were of an artificial and political sort. The difficulty was not to make our system succeed, but to get the system established at all, after which it stood as a barrier between the disease and that which I hold to be the aliment of the disease, the compulsory fund, when by the pure *vis medicatrix* of the body politic, the pauperism subsided of itself. We were complimented for our strenuousness and skill; but we all along felt it to be quite undeserved, assured as we were, that under the same system the same effects would follow all the world over.

130. Do those observations comprehend your view of the rationale of your experiment ?—On the subject of the rationale, I do not think I can speak more effectually than I have already written in a few lines taken from a small pamphlet I have published. ‘ This is the rationale of the process : a deacon, when first appointed to his district, may find it very troublesome at the first, and perhaps alarmingly so. There is among a part of the people a very natural expectation from him, and urgency upon him at the outset of his ministrations, and it is in the power of a very few to keep him in considerable perplexity and occupation for some time ; but let him meet with strict investigation one and all of the applications that are made, and this at last will act upon them by a preventive influence, and they simply cease to apply. If it be his object to guide them as much as he may to their own resources, all who are conscious of such resources will shun the detection and the disgrace attending an unworthy application. At the same time his own sentiment as to the evil and the disgrace of public charity insensibly spreads itself among the population, and the more surely if there be perfect frankness in his intercourse, and perfect friendship in his regards towards them. It is thus that, in ordinary times, he may conduct them in a very few weeks to a habit of most mild and manageable quiescence ; a habit from which, if they are not disturbed by new methods of administration, by changes of system, and reports of great things to be done, and great things intended for them, they will persevere in for ever.’ With reference to the present state of St. John’s, I would like to mention, that never a parish underwent such rough treatment, or

passed through so severe an ordeal as it has done since I left it, for there have been two successors, and pretty long vacancies, during which vacancies the collections of course fell away; the management wanted a head; yet we weathered all those reverses, inasmuch that Mr. M'Farlane, my first successor, was enabled to write of the plan in this way, in a letter dated Glasgow, 13th of December, 1825: 'In the meantime I can state with confidence from my own observation, that a radical spirit at least discovers itself in the sturdiness with which men and women insist on relief from our poor fund; and I have no doubt that the spirit of radicalism is greatly increased by the separation which compulsory provision for the poor creates between the rich and the poor. You must be surprised, when I tell you we have had no prosecutions, though we have repeatedly been threatened with them. The experiment has succeeded in all points. I will not say beyond Dr. Chalmers's, but certainly beyond my most sanguine expectations. I do not despair of seeing the plan universally adopted in Glasgow.' Then, in a letter of the 19th August, 1826, he says, 'I am consoled by reflecting, that the experience of the deacons during a long vacancy, and Mr. Brown's (present minister of St. John's) experience since his induction, unite with my own in proving the excellence of the St. John's system, and that there is nothing to hinder it from being permanent but the lukewarmness of the agency. At present they are as full of zeal in the cause as they were under Dr. Chalmers. I hope I may be able to encourage them by the introduction of the system into St. Enoch's parish, and I do not despair of seeing all Glasgow pervaded by this wholesome mode of attending to

the wants of the poor. You may state, on the best authority, that there is not the most distant prospect of its falling to the ground, and that the successors of Dr. Chalmers, you have reason to believe, approve of it as strongly as the Doctor himself.'

131. Can you state the average number who have derived assistance from this fund in the parish of St. John?—When we commenced our operations we had 117 sessional poor, and, as far as they could be traced, forty-nine hospital poor: the sessional poor we ourselves undertook, the others we left to the Town Hospital. This number of 117 was reduced to ninety-eight by the abstraction of a slice from the parish; and during my incumbency in St. John's it was further reduced to seventy-seven, and that without sending any new cases to the Town Hospital. The achievement would have been equal to my own expectation although that number had remained stationary, because the whole promise of the achievement was, that no new cases were to be sent to the Town Hospital, but in point of fact the sessional poor were reduced in number. Then, in 1820, I think it is fair to take back the nineteen again, who were taken away by the abstraction of a slice, because the population has increased as much since that time as it was diminished by the abstraction. In 1829, then, the present number of paupers is ninety-nine; whereas the original number of paupers when I undertook the management of the parish, including both Town Hospital and sessional poor, was 164. I have one thing more to say: there is mention made in Mr. M'Farlane's letter about the agents keeping up their attention and their strenuousness; the Committee have been made aware of the small labour that it

costs the agents, but supposing a new agent comes in, until the people have had experience of equal skill or of equal strenuousness on his part, he has naturally a press of applications at the outset, which, if met by him as by the other agents, will just be followed up by the same result ; that is, the people will simply cease to apply. Now I think it important to advert to this circumstance, because it is said that the plan is not universally imitable ; for where can we find such an agency ? Now I should like it to be understood wherein the precise use and necessity of that agency consisted. Were there no Town Hospital in our immediate neighbourhood, were there no system of compulsory provision all about us, and were we not under the necessity of so investigating every case as to make it palpable that all the ascertained poor are as well off in St. John's as in the parts immediately around, there would be no need of such an agency at all. We are under the necessity of producing that vindication, because it has been by our own movement that we have passed these people from a compulsory to a gratuitous system of relief ; but in a natural state of things no strenuousness on the part of an agency would be necessary, and the only reason why this strenuousness is required is, that an artificial or compulsory provision has given a movement to the people in one direction, and there is the necessity for an artificial counteractive to keep the people back in the other direction, so as to keep them in an intermediate and right state. This is very much confirmed by the case of the parish of Gorbals, the state of whose pauperism, though not so striking as that of St. John's, because there, there was no retracing process, is fully as instructive in regard to the real principle

upon which public charity ought to proceed ; because, in as far as the parish of Gorbals is concerned, it never has adopted the system of a compulsory provision. The peculiarity of the parish of St. John is, that after having adopted and proceeded a great length under a compulsory provision, there was a means devised of tracing it back, but the parish of Gorbals never has adopted it, and accordingly they have no such peculiar agency of deacons as we have, yet without this they exhibit a far more marvellous pecuniary result. It is evident from their case, that no strenuous agency is required where the people have been deprived of no right, and have not been habituated to any expectation from a compulsory fund.

132. Then in a county in which the poor law system, by means of assessment, was not already introduced, the difficulty and the necessity of the agency you have described in the parish of St. John's would not exist ?—It would not ; I had several agencies in St. John's ; I had a Sabbath-school agency for Christian and educational objects ; I think that in every country such agencies are desirable ; but for a mere economical object, and with reference to pauperism, I should say, that no strenuousness of agency is requisite.

133. Then you consider that this strenuousness of agency is requisite to extricate a parish from an artificial state, and not to maintain it in a natural state, if it be already placed in it ?—Precisely so.

134. The last letter to which you adverted was in 1826 ; have you any subsequent accounts of the state of the parish of St. John's ?—I have a very satisfactory letter from Mr. M'Farlane, my first successor, who has been transferred to another parish in Glasgow, dated 20th of April, 1830.

‘MY DEAR SIR,—You cannot be more fully satisfied of the excellence of the St. John’s system of pauperism than I am, nor can I imagine how any man who approves of our country parish system can object to it, for it has always appeared to me to be neither more nor less than the Scottish country parish system applied by means of a peculiar agency or machinery to our city parishes. I hope to be able, at no distant period, to show, that if there is in our large towns a greater number of poor, there is also a much greater amount of wealth to supply the wants of the poor, and no want of a disposition to apply it to that purpose. . The St. John’s system appears to me to create the link which connects the rich and the beneficent with the poor, it being the office of the deacons not only to prevent imposture by their rigid examination of all the cases which come before them, but also to bring the real and deserving poor under the eye of those who may have it in their power to provide work for their children, or to contribute otherwise to their relief. As the friend of the poor, I am an advocate for the system ; I am convinced that if it universally prevailed in our large towns, it would greatly alleviate much of the misery which now exists, and, by creating and strengthening habits of industry and economy, would promote materially the moral improvement, and consequently the happiness of the poor.

‘The experience of the sixteen months during which I was minister of St. John’s confirmed the favourable opinion which I previously entertained of the system ; it worked well in all respects ; with an income from collections not much exceeding £300 we kept down the pauperism of a parish containing a population of

10,000, and I know from actual observation that the poor were in better condition, and, excepting the worthless and profligate who applied, and were refused assistance, were more contented and happy than the poor in the other parishes of Glasgow; I was also agreeably disappointed at finding that Dr. Chalmers was not the only person having sufficient influence to obtain the aid of the respectable members of his congregation in administering the affairs of the poor. I had not the smallest difficulty in procuring a sufficient number of deacons for that purpose.

‘You are aware, that in the month of November, 1825, I was appointed to another parish in this city, at that time under the old system; and although that system was better administered in St. Enoch’s parish than it was perhaps in any other in similar circumstances, I could not fail to perceive its defects; and, therefore, with the concurrence of the kirk-session, a system in all essential points similar to that of St. John’s has been established. It has now been in operation for eight or nine months, and has hitherto succeeded to my utmost wishes. The assessment is the only thing that stands in my way; it chills both public and private charity; many of the wealthy members of my congregation do not hesitate to assign it as an apology for contributing sparingly to our church-door collections; and I fear that it has a pernicious influence on their habits of private charity; notwithstanding, we are confident of success.

‘Wishing all success to those who would ward off from the *poor* of Ireland the dreadful influence of poor rates.—I am, My Dear Sir, yours always sincerely,

‘PATRICK M’FARLANE.’

I have to state that we are under very peculiar disadvantages in these parishes, St. Enoch's and St. John's ; because it has a paralyzing influence on the liberalities of the wealthy to our poor, that those wealthy are also brought in to support the expenditure of the general system in Glasgow, and it is extremely discouraging, that though we have cleared away the burden of a compulsory provision from the parish of St. John's, yet the householders and the proprietors in that parish are just as much subject as before to assessment for the general expenses of the poor in the city.

135. Do you find that that burden which is cast upon them, not by reason of the necessities of their own parish, but by reason of the system prevailing in other parishes, has a tendency to check their benevolence within the parish of St. John's ?—I am perfectly sure that it has. As a specimen of the misconceptions to which we are exposed, and the extreme difficulty of convincing the public at large of the goodness of our system, although under it pauperism has been cleared away from certain portions of the territory of Glasgow, without discharging it on the other parishes, as is established by the amount of the imports and exports in regard to the poor, yet it is in the power of the administrators of the compulsory system, in the assessed part of Glasgow, to keep up as before the whole burden of the assessment ; or, without ascribing it to them at all, such is the inherent mischief that resides in the system of assessment, that it carries in it the principle of its own acceleration, inasmuch, that although confined within a narrower territory, it can keep up an equal burden as before, from which the inference made is, that this experiment of St.

John's is certainly not worth trying in other parishes, and has not proved successful, because the citizens find themselves as much burdened as ever for support of the poor; so that after having cleared away pauperism from St. John's, and demonstrated the efficacy of the gratuitous system in that part of the territory where it has been permitted to operate, we are exposed to discredit and obloquy, and made responsible, because of the mischief of the compulsory system in other parts of Glasgow.

136. Having brought your evidence on the subject of the parish of St. John's up to the date of the last letter in 1830, will you describe the district which is called the Barony of Glasgow, and the system which there prevails for the relief of the poor?—I believe the population of the Barony is now upwards of 60,000, it was about 50,000 when I left Glasgow. The principle of a legal assessment was introduced into that parish so late as 1810, and I have reason to know, very much against the opinion of the minister. Before that time the whole expense of maintaining the poor seldom exceeded £600 a year; about the year 1810, or to speak precisely, according to the census of 1811, the population was 37,216, an exclusively manufacturing population, with the exception of a country district belonging to it. I have lost sight of the Barony since 1817, which was seven years after the adoption of the method of assessment, but the burden increased nearly six times in the short space of seven years, the expenditure rising considerably above £3000.

137. Can you state the number of the poor at the time that the amount of relief under a voluntary system was only £600, and the number of poor under the assessed system when it had augmented to £3000?

—I am sorry that I am not furnished with the numbers, but I will procure them for the information of the Committee.

138. During those seven years were you able to estimate the effects of this increased expense upon the condition of the poor themselves?—I could say in the general, that abstracting from those fluctuations that proceed from other causes, such as the state of trade, there was no sensible improvement produced by the increase of this expenditure.

139. Were you able to trace whether there was so much sympathy or charity on the part of the higher classes, under the increase and progress of the assessment principle, as there had been under the system of voluntary contribution?—It is extremely difficult to take observation of that in individual instances; but the general effect all over Scotland of the introduction of the assessments has been to diminish the collections, which forms so far a palpable illustration of their ill effect.

140. Is there not another district in Glasgow which is called the Gorbals?—That is the southern suburb of Glasgow.

141. What is the population?—I believe now between 20,000 and 30,000, but at the time when I took an account of its expenditure, its population was upwards of 20,000.

142. Is that a manufacturing population?—Exclusively a manufacturing population.

143. Are there any causes in the actual condition of the population themselves, that would, under similar circumstances, make the condition of the population in the Gorbals better than that of the population of the Barony?—No: I should think rather worse;

because there are no agricultural resources, whereas the Barony has a large country parish.

144. Is the assessment principle introduced into the Gorbals ?—Not that I am aware of ; it was not introduced there very recently.

145. Can you state what is the voluntary contribution applied in the unassessed district of the Gorbals for the relief of the poor ?—The whole expenditure was £350.

146. Can you compare the state of the poor in the unassessed district of the Gorbals, with an expenditure of £350, with the state of the assessed district of the Barony when the assessment had reached £3000 ?—There is one very palpable test of the relative condition of the three districts, one of them being Glasgow proper, which occurred in 1817 ; there was an extraordinary expenditure of about £10,000, raised by subscription, in order to meet the distress of the population, incurred by a very extraordinary depression that had taken place in trade. This subscription applied to all the three districts, and was distributed by a committee of management which sat in judgment on all the individual applications. The whole sum required for the extraordinary wants of 1817, in the Gorbals, was £835.

147. What was the amount of extraordinary relief required for the Barony ?—I have not the numerical statement by me, but the Barony required somewhat more than three times the money, whereas its population is only somewhat more than double but not nearly three times the population of the Gorbals.

148. Therefore the state of the population being nearly the same, or if there be a difference, the difference being against the Gorbals in this time of

extraordinary relief, there was more relief required for the Barony than for the Gorbals, notwithstanding the increase of assessment in the one and the absence of assessment in the other ?—Yes.

149. Can you state the entire amount of relief required for the poor of Glasgow, and the proportion of that relief which was taken for the Gorbals ?—There was about £10,000 expended on all the three districts, and only £835 on the Gorbals. I cannot state with numerical precision the sum expended on Glasgow proper. Its population was very little more than one-third of the population of the Gorbals, and the amount of relief which it required was somewhat more than seven times the sum which the Gorbals required, so that the disproportion between Glasgow and the Gorbals is much greater than the disproportion between the Barony and the Gorbals; that is, the district longest under assessment required the largest proportion, and the least proportion was required in the district that had not been under assessment at all.

150. Therefore the measure of assessment would seem almost a measure of the distress which remained to be relieved by extraordinary means ?—Precisely so. I think it right to say, in regard to the present state of St. John's, as justifying a reliance upon the result of our experiment, that there is in one respect a very great precariousness; for let two or three only of the agents relax their management by a very little, such is the inherent power of increase in all systems of public charity which are carelessly conducted, that it would be in the power even of these few to upset the experiment. The true doctrinal inference which may be drawn out of the past history of St. John's ought

not to be affected by any thing future in the history of that parish, particularly when one adverts to the very great discouragements by which the parish is surrounded, as well as the great mischief which it is in the power even of a small fraction of the agency to bring upon the parish, by letting down the strictness of their administration. The discouragements are great indeed : the establishment of a new system always makes slow progress amongst practical men, insomuch that I have found it far easier practically to do the thing, than to convince men that the thing is practicable. There is a considerable feeling of hostility to this gratuitous method of relieving the poor. In reference to a question which was put two days ago, regarding the expenditure in the northern parishes of England under their best management, as being equal to the expenditure of the Scottish border parishes where assessments have been introduced under their worst management, the reason of that I apprehend to be, the system of assessment has not had the same time to work in the border parishes that it has had in England. It appears to me a very prevalent delusion on the subject of our Scottish pauperism, that people are always looking for its benefits to our method of dispensation, or to the construction of our courts of supply ; whereas I hold the benefit of the Scottish system to lie altogether in the reflex influence which a gratuitous economy of relief, with its moderate allowances, will always have upon the habits and expectations of a people. The English principle of a compulsory provision grafted on our Scottish machinery, may do as much mischief in the one country as has been done in the other.

151. Are there any other instances in Scotland of

parishes that have been liable to a compulsory assessment, where that compulsory assessment, as in St. John's, has been abandoned, and gone to the system you adopted there?—There are several parishes under what I call the retracing process : there is the parish of Dirlton, in the county of East Lothian ; there has been an exceedingly good book written upon the subject by the clergyman, Mr. Stark of Dirlton. The parish of Dumblane, a good many years ago, adopted the retracing system, and fully succeeded in it. There is another parish, in Berwickshire, but the name has escaped me. We cannot expect, however, that the attempt will often be made in the present state of the law.

152. Would you be of opinion that the retracing system might generally be adopted in Scotland?—I think with certainty of success ; but that it ought to be commenced in a particular way, and if that be not attended to, the enterprise may be spoiled or put off for a considerable time. There are two distinct processes, both of which should be observed, when the object is to work a whole country out of its pauperism ; there is the parochial process, and what I should be inclined to call the Parliamentary process, or the legal one. In as far as the parochial process is concerned, I would provide for the old cases that were actually upon the compulsory fund out of that fund until they had died out, so that it would require several years before we got quit of the compulsory provision ; I would meet, in the meanwhile, all the new applications with the money raised by collections, just as they do in any Scottish parish ; what I should anticipate is, that before the collection is overtaken by the new cases, the old cases will have died out, and have dis-

engaged the compulsory fund altogether, so as to bring the parish back again to the gratuitous economy that obtains generally in Scotland ; but it appears to me that before this can be carried into effect, there must be an interposition on the part of Parliament, because it is at all times competent for a dissatisfied claimant, more especially if backed by any powerful enemies to the system in his neighbourhood, to bring the administrators to the bar of the court of session, and it is very unpleasant to be over-hung by any possibility of that sort, so that there would be a necessity for such a law as might protect every retracing parish from an appeal to the court of session, by making its kirk-session an ultimate court. Now, in going about to frame such a law, there is a most material distinction that, I think, should be proceeded on between the effect of a compulsory and that of a permissive law. Suppose that a Bill were brought into Parliament making it imperative upon all the assessed parishes to adopt this system ; those parishes are not yet prepared for the measure, they have not information nor conviction upon the subject, the consequence of which is, that there behoved to be a very strong and general opposition to such a law, wherever the compulsory assessment prevailed. Accordingly, we did experience this opposition in a recent attempt to reform Scottish pauperism ; Glasgow and Edinburgh petitioned, and almost all the great towns, with many of the counties, petitioned against such a measure passing into a law ; they would have had no interest in thus resisting it if it had been merely permissive, and the effect of such permission, I feel persuaded, would have been that we should have had so many trial parishes at this moment

working themselves out of their compulsory pauperism, while the more unmanageable and difficult parishes would have been standing by and waiting the result of the experiment. The success of those would awaken the attention of other parishes, and thus piece-meal, and by a successive process, the country may at length have been wholly delivered from its pauperism.

153. Is not the first step necessary, as far as legislative provision is required, a legislative declaration or enactment that would do away with the claim of right on the part of the pauper?—On the part of the parish that came forward with that degree of consent which might be specified in the public and general Act that was passed on the subject.

154. Then what you suggest is, that parishes, upon applications founded upon a certain degree of assent from the parish itself, should be freed from the necessity by compulsion of providing for the poor?—Quite so.

155. In Scotland, is the compulsory system upon the advance in the different parishes or otherwise?—Upon the whole, it is on the advance.

156. It has sometimes been suggested, that however expedient or possible it may be to do without a compulsory provision of assessment in agricultural parishes, that such a system is absolutely necessary to meet the fluctuations which arise in manufacturing districts, and the alterations in the amount of wages; what is your opinion upon that subject?—It does not all accord with my experience that a compulsory provision is more necessary in a manufacturing than in an agricultural parish; and I perceive one very great disadvantage arising from it in the former class of

parishes ; in a season of great depression, when wages fall as low as five shillings or six shillings a week, those wages are supplemented by some small additional allowance of one shilling and sixpence perhaps, or two shillings a week. This keeps the people at their professional work, which has the effect of keeping up the glut in the market, and so lengthening out those seasons of depression to which every manufacturing population is liable.

157. Does not the compulsory system also act upon the habits of the poor during those periods when, in the fluctuation of wages, by increased demand and increased employment, wages become very high ?—It acts, I think, by a very mischievous influence upon the habits of the poor during those periods, because it gives the feeling that they may be as reckless and extravagant as they like in good times, from having this to resort to in bad times.

158. Is that opinion supported by your observation of facts, as well as by your reasoning upon general principles ?—I think it is supported by the observation of a good many facts ; I remember in a season of great depression in Glasgow, the question was, whether the unemployed people, or the people who alleged themselves to be unemployed, should be supported by an additional allowance, or whether work at low wages should be held out to them, that would detach them from their professional employment ; I strongly advocated the latter method, because I said that the former method just kept them at their looms, and kept up the glut in the market, and so perpetuated and aggravated the very evil that it was intended to remedy ; whereas, if they withdrew so many of them from their professional work, and gave them any

other, such as ground work upon the green of Glasgow, or the breaking of stones, it would be found much less expensive to defray the entire maintenance of all who offered themselves for this extra professional work, than to keep them all at their professional work at a fraction of the cost of their maintenance in the shape of a supplementary allowance ; I think it is the uniform experience of manufacturing towns, that with the former method it is much easier to get over a season of depression than with the latter method. Now, with a poor rate in a manufacturing town, we have the whole disadvantage of the latter method, because we just supplement the defective wages, whereas, in a natural state of things, we have the advantage of the former method, by the people dispersing themselves and quitting for a season their professional work. Many of them, in these excursions, abandon the town, and find out for themselves some employment in the country, which detaches them from their looms for a period. There was a very instructive survey, and pregnant with weightiest inference upon this subject, made by Mr. Cleland of Glasgow, at a season of great depression ; he took account of all the looms in Glasgow and its neighbourhood, for the purpose of ascertaining how many were unoccupied : the number of looms in operation in ordinary times was 18,537, but at this season he found only 13,281 at work, leaving 5256 looms idle. This must have been a very wholesome cessation, the benefit of which is greatly impaired under a system of poor rate. In a natural state of things, there is a freer dispersion of people away from their professional employment ; whereas there is an adhesive virtue in the poor rate, which keeps the people together,

and so lengthens out every season of over-laden markets and low wages.

159. If the system of relief have a tendency to keep the persons engaged in manufacturing industry when the wages of labour and the profits of that manufacture are considerably diminished, has it not also the effect of diminishing the profits of the other persons engaged in that branch of industry, and of reducing them to the same distress in which the others have been involved?—There is no doubt of it, by its keeping up the glut in the market; and I have often seen the manufacturers of Glasgow very seriously embarrassed by the multitude of workmen that solicited employment from them.

160. What became of those 5000 that were thrown out of work in Glasgow, at the period you have referred to?—It is exceedingly difficult to trace that, but there are a great many country and extraneous resources which people find out when the market is overstocked with the commodity which it is their business to prepare.

161. Did they remove at that time from their usual places of residence?—There was a very general temporary emigration from Glasgow at that time.

162. Do you consider that the compulsory system of relief has a tendency of raising or of lowering the rate of wages?—Decidedly to lower the rate of wages. When wages are helped by the allowance system, they may be resolved into two ingredients; the one consisting of wages, and the other the sum given for the poor rate. I have no doubt that the whole recompense for labour, as made up of both ingredients, is lower than the whole recompense would have been in a natural state of things.

163. Comparing two countries in which the rate of wages is higher in the one than in the other, and a free intercourse of labour subsisting between them, if in one of those countries no compulsory system of wages prevails, and labour is cheap, and there is in consequence an emigration from that country to the other where labour is dear, do you conceive that the introduction of a poor's rate in the country where labour is cheap would have a tendency to increase the emigration or diminish it?—I think it would tend to increase the emigration.

164. That would result upon the principles you have described of lowering the rate of wages, and thereby increasing the difference between the rate of wages in the two countries?—Yes.

165. Would it not have this additional inducement to seek labour in the other country, that by the poor law there would be a provision made for the females and the children of the labourer who came to seek employment elsewhere?—Yes, and in that way discharge him from the necessity of remaining at home. It strikes me, that if it be proposed to establish the compulsory system in a country contiguous to our own, it may be done in different ways: if it be meant that it shall be divested of what has often been called the worst feature of the English pauperism, the allowance system, then I do not see how the emigration can be at all lessened, because if the poor's fund is only to be applied to the impotent and the aged, those are not the people to whom we are exposed; we have still as large a body as ever of able and healthy men coming over, who are discharged, in fact, from the necessity of remaining at home, and who will therefore come over in greater numbers: if, on the

other hand, it be proposed to establish in the other country the English system in all its entirety, granting an allowance to able-bodied labourers as well as to the others, then if this extends only to a part of the able-bodied labourers of the land, the sure effect will be the general reduction of wages throughout the whole body, so that the part not having the benefit of those allowances will be under a much stronger necessity than before to come to this country ; or lastly, if in order to meet this, it be proposed to extend allowances to able-bodied labourers to the population *en masse*, this, without after all accomplishing the object of lessening emigration, would lead the country into such an expense as would be tantamount to a sentence of extinction upon its landed property.

166. Reverting to your former evidence, if it had a tendency to lower the rate of wages, even independently of these consequences to which you have last adverted, must it not increase the tendency of cheap labour to seek a higher market ?—Decidedly.

167. Do you consider that the questions you have answered in the abstract would apply to the condition of things existing between England and Ireland ?—I certainly do ; I think it descriptive of the relative condition of the two countries.

168. You have stated the effect which you consider the assessment principle produces upon the rate of wages ; what effect do you think it produces upon the general prices of the necessaries of life ?—I am not sure that it would affect the price of the first necessaries of life ; but whatever effect be produced on the price of the first necessaries of life, and from whatever cause, it brings another element into operation, which

at length makes the real wages of labour very much what it was originally.

169. The question was limited to the first and immediate effect of any such artificial supply ; and to make it clearer, will you have the goodness to advert to the state of Glasgow in 1817, in which there was an extra relief to the extent of £10,000 given in the city of Glasgow ; taking that relief to consist either of assessment or grant, what effect do you conceive was produced by that assessment, or the expenditure consequent upon it, upon the price of bread ?—I think, as far as it went, it would raise the price of bread.

170. Although ultimately by creating a greater demand it would have a tendency to produce a greater supply, and thereby diminish the price of bread, must not the first effect of it be to raise the price of bread ?—I think so.

171. Therefore, unless the assessment was sufficient to cover a rise of price, in the general rise of price the poor would suffer more than they would receive relief from the assessment ?—Yes ; and it is a suffering that would extend itself to those who had not received the benefit of the assessment ; so that it appears to me that in that way there is a transference of distress made from the class that receive, to those who are immediately above them and that do not receive.

172. Must not that transference have a tendency to augment the number of paupers ?—Decidedly.

173. Supposing relief in distress to be given by employment, what effect do you conceive it would produce upon the free industry of persons not receiving that relief, and upon the natural application of capital ?—I think it must be injurious, if it be proposed to give relief through the medium of work,

and if this be a work that a certain population are already engaged in, that by bringing down the price of their commodity, it must operate to the prejudice of the free labourers.

174. Supposing in a population of 10,000 weavers, 2000 of those weavers being thrown out of employment, are employed in weaving in a public establishment for the relief of distress, does not that produce, in addition to the general lowering of prices, a principle of competition not founded upon the principles of profit, but founded upon the hope of benefit and of charity, which must derange the ordinary operations of industry on the part of the 8000 weavers who would otherwise be employed?—I certainly think so ; it must lessen their wages, and also lessen, if not destroy the profits of the capitalist.

175. Under ordinary principles of employing capital, is not every man protected from any competition, except in very peculiar cases, in which the competitor does not receive a fair return for the capital he employs?—He is protected from competition in so far as traders will be restrained from embarking more capital in a business which they think is on the eve of being overdone.

176. Is not the operation of this protective principle obstructed if labourers are employed for charitable purposes only?—I do think so ; and it has all the mischief of a bounty confined to one set and not enjoyed by another.

177. Such being the difficulty if relief is granted in the way of employment, what would be the effect of its being granted in money without employment?—It would act in the first instance as a stimulus to population.

178. How would it act upon industry ?—I think it would tend to slacken industry.

179. If relief be given in proportion to the number of children, what would be the consequences that you would calculate upon ?—I think it is quite clear that that must operate as a bounty upon population, and so aggravate the general distress of the country.

180. Do you consider that any correction of the administration of the principle of assessment can correct the evils you have described as being incident to the system itself ?—I do not think that any improvement in the method of administration can make head against the essential and inherent evil of the principle.

181. Should you apply the same observation with respect to the evils of assessment to a country not in a high state of civilization, that you would apply to a country in the condition of Great Britain ?—I think that if the principle of assessment for the relief of poverty be introduced, it will deteriorate the condition of any country.

182. You think that if it were applied to the condition of the least improved of the European countries, it would have a tendency to lower the condition of that country ?—I certainly think that it would.

183. Supposing the retracing system which you have described followed, do you conceive there would be a danger of increased suffering, if, after due preparation by that retracing process, the power of compulsory assessment were altogether withdrawn ?—I am quite satisfied that upon the abolition of the compulsory system, there would ensue a full compensation to the people for the whole amount that had been withdrawn from them in consequence of that abolition. I feel convinced that the augmented industry and

economy of the people would prevent more than one-half of the poverty that is now relieved under the compulsory system ; then, that the relative affections, restored to natural and proper strength, would do more than provide for the half of what remained ; then, that the kindness of the poor one for another, no longer diverted from its natural exercise by the prospect of relief *ab extra*, would set agoing a busy process of internal charity that would nearly overtake the last remainder, and leave the rich less of unrelieved distress to contend with under a natural system than they have at present under the compulsory.

184. Are you of opinion that that could be accomplished in England, where the population is supposed to be so redundant ?—Yes, I think it is capable of being accomplished in England, provided the two processes are strictly attended to, that I have already adverted to.

185. Taking into consideration the present state of the poor laws in England, under which the people have been so long accustomed to receive relief, are you still of that opinion ?—Yes ; because the first process, or the parochial one, supposes that all the existing cases are to be provided for as they are at present, and thus makes the work a very gradual one in reference to the families of a parish ; and the second process makes it a gradual work in reference to the parishes of the country, because each parish is left to adopt it under certain specified conditions, just as each parish encloses its own commons under certain specified conditions, so going on, not simultaneously, but successively.

186. How are the Committee to understand that you consider the compulsory system to have the tendency of increasing the number of persons requiring

relief, and at the same time giving an amount of relief which is less than the relief that would be afforded from private sources, and thereby having a diminished means of relief to apply to a greater number of cases of distress?—I think that under the compulsory system of England there is a greater surplus of unrelieved suffering than there would be under the natural system; and that this unrelieved suffering under the natural system would meet with securities for its being relieved, which the compulsory system has the effect of diminishing, if not of extinguishing altogether.

187. Does that relief principally depend upon the kindly feelings of the neighbourhood, which you have described to operate in Scotland?—The efficacy of the natural system lies more in prevention than relief, and altogether depends, first, on the improved habits of industry and economy among the population; second, on the increased exercise that would be given to the relative affections; third, on that mutual kindness which obtains between the poor in the same neighbourhood; and both last and least, on the stimulated liberalities of the rich.

188. In order to make that source of relief effectual, must there not be a general disposition to voluntary contribution among the people?—After the experience I have had in St. John's, I count less on the disposition to voluntary contributions than I at one time thought would be necessary. I now feel that a very small fund might suffice to meet the new applications, and that the success of a retracing process depends more upon its reflex influence on the habits of the people themselves than on the sum raised by collection.

189. Do you conceive that even the alms and the

collections of the kirk-session themselves, laying out of consideration altogether the question of compulsory assessment, are more productive of benefit in relieving distress than they may be productive of evil, upon the principles you have laid down, by exciting expectation among the poor ?—I think there is a distinction to be made between what may be called the economic influences of our Scottish voluntary system, and its moral influences. In as far as the economic influences go, they may, to a certain degree, be productive of evil. Even our public charity does induce a certain degree of dependence on the part of the families, and that dependence outruns the power of the kirk-session to relieve their wants, so as to cause a relaxation which outstrips somewhat the amount of relief ; but although I do not hold the parochial charity of Scotland to be productive of any good, but rather to a slight degree of the contrary, economically speaking, yet I feel desirous of its being kept up on several accounts ; first, it may be furnished with safe and salutary absorbents in directing its means to the relief of disease, in providing for the deaf and dumb, and for lunatics, and for all who are better cared for at public institutions than they could be at their own houses ; secondly, our parochial charity does provide an occasion of intercourse between the very poorest of our people and the elders of the parish, so as to secure that their cases shall be more extensively known, and in that way opening upon them to a greater extent relief from private sources. Again, from the small proportion of our paupers to the whole population, a man never enters into the situation of a regular pauper without making a noticeable descent below the level of the plebeian community. To save him

from this, both his own energies and the feelings of his relatives and friends are brought vigorously into play. Lastly, I have adverted to another influence that runs along the margin of our poverty : the great mass of our people in the unassessed parishes contribute their halfpennies at the Sunday collection, and they have persevered in this habit for years. Now, in virtue of this habit, the transition would be felt the more painful to the state of being receivers, so that the moral distance of our families from pauperism is widened by this operation, and the moral barrier is strengthened in the way of their entering within the verge of pauperism ; but in as far as the mere economical good to the people by relief, coming out of the positive distributions of the kirk-session is concerned, I would say, that upon the whole it is productive of no advantage to the Scottish population.

190. Do you consider that there is any practical difference between the administration of funds raised by assessment for relief, and the administration of equal funds produced by voluntary contributions, or the gifts of private charity ?—I think that the feeling of right, associated with the former, produces a very important practical difference in favour of the voluntary fund. But I further think, that there is mischief in any public or conspicuous organization got up for the relief of want. In several parishes of Scotland there is a voluntary association, which contributes something over and above the collection at the church doors, and to the sum thus raised they give a different title from that of an assessment. This certainly is less hurtful than a distribution to the same amount when raised by assessment, but much more

hurtful than the same sum when distributed unseen and by private individuals.

191. Comparing the administration of two funds of equal amount, in a population of equal distress, do you not consider that the good done will be in proportion to the moral discrimination with which that relief is given ?—Undoubtedly.

192. From your comparison of the administration of funds raised by assessment with the administration of funds raised by voluntary contribution, do you conceive that an equal reliance can be placed upon the moral discrimination with which the one class of resources are administered and the other ?—I think there is much greater moral discrimination by the administrators of the voluntary fund than by the administrators of the other, but that there is a still greater moral discrimination by individuals, more especially when their charity is given within the spheres of their respective acquaintanceship, which is the direction, I believe, it generally takes.

193. Will not the managers of a voluntary fund distribute it with more discrimination and frugality than the managers of a compulsory fund ?—I think so.

194. Do you consider that the distress of any given number of labourers may be resolved into the proportion existing between the number of those labourers and the power of employing capital productively in the employment of those labourers ?—Yes ; I think that upon those two elements the state of the labourer depends.

195. Do you consider that a compulsory assessment has a tendency either to increase the capital or the means of employing it productively, or to diminish the supply of labour ?—I think it has no tendency

either to increase the capital or to decrease the supply of labour; on the contrary, to increase the supply of labour, and therefore to aggravate the distress.

196. Do you consider that capital raised by assessment and employed in labour, will be employed as profitably as if that capital were left to seek its natural employment with a view to profit?—I conceive it will be employed much more profitably in the latter way.

197. Then the assessment only making a new appropriation of the capital, and not creating any capital, or augmenting the means of employing it profitably, but tending to diminish those means, must it not have a further influence in lowering the condition of the poor themselves?—I certainly think so.

198. Do you conceive there is any mode of employing a compulsory assessment which could have the effect of raising the wages of labour?—I certainly do not see any, but think the effect would be all the other way.

199. In those states of transition which occur in the passing from one mode of life to another, as for example in early times, from hunting to pastoral life, or from agricultural to manufacturing, or from the hand manufacture to manufacture carried on by machinery, do you conceive that compulsory assessment may be necessary to carry the bulk of the population through the peculiar pressure of distress in the transition state?—I should think that any temporary distress consequent upon such a transition, if necessary to be met at all, should be met by temporary expedients, and that if met by the establishment of a poor law, it would only tend to perpetuate evils which might otherwise have soon passed away.

200. Those processes which have been alluded to,

although productive of temporary suffering, having a general and ultimate tendency to good, would not the application of a compulsory system of relief disturb and impede them, and thereby impede the general good which may be ultimately produced ?—I certainly think so.

201. Where those cases are of frequent recurrence, would not the application of temporary expedients to each of them induce the necessity of some permanent mode, such as a poor law, of meeting those cases ?—My experience of the operation of all those temporary expedients is, that they are more called for in those places where the assessment has been acted on, than in those places where there is no assessment, so that the pressure to which a country is exposed periodically from certain fluctuations in its state, is a pressure that will be felt with greater severity in an assessed than in an unassessed district.

202. Therefore, if those temporary expedients led to the introduction of a permanent assessment, you consider that the necessity of recurrence to extraordinary systems of relief would be more frequent under the assessment system than under the unassessed system ?—I certainly think so.

203. Have you turned your attention to the existing state of things in Ireland ?—In a general way, I have ; I must confess my ignorance of Ireland, in as far as a very minute and statistical acquaintance with the condition of its people is concerned.

204. Have you been in Ireland ?—I have been in Ireland, but not in that part of it which is peculiarly or characteristically Irish. I have only been in the north of Ireland, and that only for a week.

205. From the attention you have been able to give

to the condition of Ireland, in the course of your observation and study, do you conceive that there exist, in that country, any difficulties to prevent the application of your general principles to Ireland?—Though not minutely or statistically acquainted with Ireland, I have great faith in the identity of human nature all the world over, and certainly my general convictions on the subject of pauperism refer as much to Ireland as to any other country.

206. It would appear from the evidence taken before this Committee, that many of the agricultural districts of Ireland are now in what may be called a transition state, and that there is a tendency, in altering the system of managing lands, to consolidate farms, and to unite together small farms of five or ten acres, into large farms of thirty and forty acres, the small cottagers passing into the state of labourers, which change seems to be productive of pressure upon the population; do you consider that those circumstances would render the introduction of any principle of assessment advisable or necessary?—The introduction of the principle of assessment would just have the same effect upon the population now about to leave their farms, that it has upon operative manufacturers in a season of depression; it would keep them together, and subject the parishes permanently to the evil resulting from a redundant population, and prevent that natural distribution of the people which is best adapted to the new state of things.

207. The population of Ireland being chiefly potato fed, which is a crop attended with great fluctuations and casualties, do you consider that those fluctuations and casualties would render a system of compulsory relief advisable?—Quite the reverse.

208. In what respect do you consider the assessment principle would be productive of evil under such circumstances ?—I think it would just add to the recklessness and improvidence of the people, and so land the country in a still greater population without increased means of maintaining them. If I may be permitted, I will advert to a principle, which I think may be called the pervading fallacy in the speculations of those who advocate the establishment of a poor rate in Ireland, and is founded on the observation of a connexion between a high state of character and a high state of economic comfort ; it is quite palpable that so it is in fact ; but there seems to be an important mistake in the order of causation. It is often conceived that comfort is the cause, and character is the effect ; now I hold that character is the cause, and that comfort is the effect. It does not appear that if you lay hold of a man thirty or forty years old, with his inveterate habits, and improve his economic condition, by giving him, through a poor rate or otherwise, £3 or £4 a year more, it does not appear to me that this man will be translated thereby into other habits, or higher tastes, but he will dissipate it generally in the same reckless and sordid kind of indulgence to which he had been previously accustomed : whereas, if instead of taking hold of the man, and attempting to elevate him by the improvement of his economic condition, you take hold of the boy, and attempt to infuse into him the other element, which I conceive to be the causal one, by means of education, then you will, through the medium of character, work out an improvement in his economic condition. What I should advise is, that education be made universal in Ireland, and that you should weather for a season

the annoyance of Ireland's mendicity, and the annoyance of that pressure which I conceive to be altogether temporary. This appears to me the only principle upon which Ireland can be securely and effectually brought to a higher standard of enjoyment, and into the state of a well-habited and well-conditioned peasantry. I think that if patiently waited for, very great results might be looked for ere another generation pass away ; but then the establishment of a poor law would throw a very heavy obstruction indeed on that educational process, to which alone I look for a permanent improvement in the state of Ireland.

209. You have stated that you conceive the tendency of the principle of assessment would be to increase population, and to create or to increase habits of improvidence, and inconsiderate marriages ; now, if it is shown that in Ireland the population has increased more rapidly, and that greater improvidence exists than in Britain, how would you reconcile those two statements, your statement of principle and this statement of fact ?—I am quite sensible of the effect which this complication of the problem has had in casting what may be called a general obscuration over it. If the only element upon which the standard of enjoyment depended was a poor rate, and if, in point of fact, we saw in a country where a poor rate was established a much higher standard of enjoyment than in a country where there was no poor rate, the inference would be a very fair one ; establish the poor rate there, and we shall bring the people up to a higher standard. But the whole matter is mixed and complicated with other influences ; there are other elements than the poor rate which enter into the question of a nation's prosperity, and have a

deciding influence on the taste and condition of the people. The low standard of enjoyment in Ireland is attributable not to the want of a poor rate, but to other causes—to misgovernment, and to imperfect education. On the other hand, there has been a gradual elevation of the people of England, keeping pace with its commerce, its growth in general opulence, its pure administration of justice. The better condition of its people, is no more due to its poor rate than it is to its national debt. Its high standard of enjoyment is not in consequence of its poor rate, but in spite of its poor rate. I believe that had there been no poor rate in England there would have been a higher standard of enjoyment than there is now; and, on the other hand, that if there had been a poor rate in Ireland there would have been a lower standard of enjoyment there than there is at present. In a word, had the condition of the two countries with reference to the single circumstance of a poor rate been reversed, there would have been a still wider difference between them in favour of England, and against Ireland, than there is at this moment.

210. You conceive that if you were to add to the causes which have tended to increase rapidly the population of Ireland, and to produce improvidence and recklessness on the part of the people, an additional cause tending in the same direction, namely, the establishment of a poor rate, you conceive the evils already existing would be very much augmented?—They would. If it is intended to introduce the system of poor rate into Ireland with a view of elevating the standard of enjoyment, or elevating the general condition of the families of Ireland, this is an aim far different from the ordinary purpose of a poor rate.

The aim of the present system of poor rate is to rescue a fraction of the people from extreme wretchedness ; but should it aim at the still more magnificent object of raising the general population above the level and the rate of its present enjoyments, the very expense of such an achievement extending to a million families in Ireland, would seem to fasten upon the scheme the charge of being utterly impracticable, besides utterly failing in its object, for that is really not the way of raising a people to higher tastes and habits of enjoyment.

211. Do you not consider that the improvidence of the people, and their recklessness in consequence of the increase of their numbers, will be found in a direct proportion to their misery and degradation, provided the misery is not of that cast which immediately affects human life ?—I think that the causal and antecedent influence in the whole matter is a moral one. The people are in an uneducated state, with perhaps no great infusion of Christian principle in their minds ; it is this which produces misery and a low economic condition, and if brought out of this by direct educational means, it will operate favourably upon their providential habits so as to restrain the tendency of the country to over-population.

212. Do you conceive that that good effect which you have suggested can be produced by an unnatural diversion of capital in the shape of a tax paid by one and received by another ?—Quite the contrary.

213. Are you not of opinion, that religious instruction and religious habits are mainly conducive to the contentment of the peasantry with their lot ?—They form, I think, the highway to a people's economic prosperity in every respect ; but may I be permitted

to say here, that there are different kinds of education.

214. In what country should you state the standard of enjoyment of the labouring classes to be higher than in Great Britain?—I am not well acquainted with the general state of other countries; I should suppose that in America the standard of enjoyment may be higher, for which there is a very palpable reason. But as if to prove that this depends not on mere physical abundance, there is also a very high standard of enjoyment in Norway. I have been told that the appearance of the peasantry in the Florentine state of Italy indicates a very high standard of enjoyment.

215. Do you know in those countries whether any and what provision is made for the poor?—I am not sufficiently informed for replying immediately to that question.

216. In those parts of Great Britain with which you are acquainted, have you found that the standard of enjoyment rises in proportion as the principle of assessment is more or less introduced?—I think that the resulting effect of the standard of enjoyment is so much due to other causes besides the poor rate, that I would not infer any thing in favour of a poor rate, though I perceived a low standard of enjoyment where it was wanting, or a high standard of enjoyment where it was established. In connexion with the standard of enjoyment, I would advert to that education of habits which has been going on for centuries in England. Its commerce and civilization have insensibly, in the course of generations, wrought up, as it were, a high standard of enjoyment among the people. The peasantry of Ireland has not had this

advantage, and neither has Scotland had it in such a degree, but the high standard of enjoyment in the latter country was brought on almost *per saltum* by a prodigiously superior kind of education to that of habits, I mean the education of principle.

217. When you speak of the standard of enjoyment, do you mean the enjoyment of something like a degree of luxury, or do you mix with it the principle of happiness?—No; in any economical reasonings I would not speak of happiness, because I can understand that from the mere natural advantages of a country; a peasant may have greater happiness, although he has less of means over and above the mere absolute necessities of life. I would estimate the standard of enjoyment by that which remains to the peasant over and above the absolute necessities of life for the purchase of other things. Now, an English traveller coming into Scotland will have an unfair idea of our standard of enjoyment from a mere cursory glance he casts upon the people. He finds them walking bare-footed, and perhaps not so respectably clothed as the English peasantry are; and that the general aspect of his house as to furniture is more slovenly than in England. But on examining the items of his expenditure, it will be found not only that decent Sabbath attire, but the education of children, and often the seat rent of church or chapel enter into his system of family economics. Taking those circumstances into account, it will be found that the standard of enjoyment is much higher among the Scottish peasantry than at first sight it appears to be.

218. In those particular instances which have come within your observation, where the compulsory assess-

ment has been withdrawn, and the poor have been supported by voluntary contribution, was the standard of enjoyment reduced by that change?—Certainly not reduced.

219. You have stated in a former part of your evidence that the effect of the assessment principle is not to be measured by the money raised and expended, but by the hope excited in the minds of those who apply for relief ; now if there be a principle of assessment which is indefinite, and which creates a right in any applicant to receive relief, must not the mischief also be indefinite and unbounded?—Quite so ; it makes the expectation indefinite, and will sink indefinitely the standard of enjoyment. On the subject of different standards among different people, I beg leave to state an anecdote, which is somewhat illustrative of the different habits of our two populations, the Irish and the Scotch. A Scotchman and an Irishman, in Glasgow, had got into converse, and were comparing notes with each other about their modes of living : the Scotchman, with a curiosity characteristic of his nation, asked the Irishman what he took to breakfast, the answer was, potatoes ; he next asked what he took to dinner, it was the same answer, potatoes ; he finally asked him what he took to supper, there was still the same unvarying answer, potatoes. The Scotchman could not altogether comprehend the mystery of such diet and regimen, and to be further resolved, asked if he took kitchen to his potatoes. Perhaps it may be necessary to explain that term. With our Scottish peasantry, the substratum of the meal is either potatoes or bread ; and if there be any thing wherewith to season it in the shape of butter or cheese, or any coarse preparation

of animal food, this, in the humble nomenclature of our poor, is called kitchen. Now, the hero of our narrative had none of all these things, and so, when questioned by the Scotchman, whether he had any kitchen to his potatoes, he, at no loss for a reply, and determined not to be outdone, said, that he made the big potatoes kitchen to the little ones. Now, to meet the question in the terms of this anecdote, whether the people will be raised to a higher condition by improving their moral character through the medium of their comfort, or improving their comfort through the medium of character, my own opinion is, that it is not by giving kitchen to the potatoes that you will moralize the men; but that if you educate and enlighten the boys, another generation will not pass away ere the universal habit of Ireland be the use of kitchen to their potatoes.

220. Do you think the effect would be the same if the kitchen were acquired by the man as the result of his own industry, as it would be if the kitchen were obtained by a tax upon others?—Certainly not; the kitchen being supplied by his own industry is the result of higher principles in the man, which principles would abide with him.

221. Have you seen any difference of habits between such of the poor in Scotland as have not acquired settlements, and those who have acquired settlements?—In as far as a settlement in an unassessed parish is concerned, the advantage is so very small, that it does not operate sensibly.

222. In an assessed parish, do you conceive there would be any difference of habits among the people, between those who had acquired settlements, and those who had not?—I have not had personal observa-

tion upon the subject, but I have been informed upon good authority that there are instances in England of people who have lost, and irrecoverably lost, all benefit from the poor rate, in consequence of their having no settlement, and that the habits of those people are of a higher kind, and their state of comfort greater than those who have the benefit of the poor rate.

223. Did you pay any attention to the time of residence of your parishioners in those parishes where the contributions were voluntary?—Yes, it is always an object, because our fund is small, and we are very willing to protect ourselves; there is a positive law upon the subject, that three years' residence gives a settlement.

224. Are you aware that the persons you have described to be without a settlement, claim relief in England as casual poor?—I am not sufficiently acquainted with all the varieties of the practice in England; the people to whom I alluded as being without a settlement, make no claim to any sort of relief; they would rather remain than be removed, and in consequence of depending wholly on their own resources, are observed to be of superior habits to those around them.

225. You stated in your former evidence that one third of the relief given out of the fund in the parish of St. John was appropriated to the relief of Irish paupers?—That applied only to the eastern district of St. John's, which comprehends about one-half of the population, and it is the poorer half, and the half in which the Irish are more numerous.

226. What proportion do the Irish population in that district bear to the Scottish population?—I

endeavoured to ascertain that before I came here, but I was not able to make it out.

227. Laying out of sight the objections you have stated to any general principle of compulsory assessment, do you not conceive that there are certain classes of misery and distress for which relief may be safely afforded, and which, if safely to be afforded, ought to be afforded ?—I think there is a very great distinction between cases of general indigence and certain other cases of distress, which may be relieved with all safety.

228. What would be the distinction in general principle that you would lay down between the two classes of cases ?—I would say that all those cases of hopeless and irrecoverable disease, or even those cases of disease which are better managed in public institutions than in private families, ought to be provided for with the utmost liberality.

229. Do you not conceive that all cases of misery, the relief of which has no tendency to increase the number of cases requiring relief, may be safely provided for ?—I think they may be provided for with all safety.

230. Would not cases of insanity, and cases of loss of sight and loss of limb, come under the latter description ?—Decidedly. Deaf and dumb asylums, lunatic asylums, institutions for the blind, infirmaries, and even fever hospitals might be supported to the uttermost on public funds. It is the more desirable a right direction should be given to public charity, and in particular to the charities of the rich ; that, generally speaking, the upper classes have a great desire to do good if they knew but how to do it. There is one way in which *ostensible* relief, whether through

the medium of an assessment or from the hands of the wealthy, might scatter on every side the elements of moral deterioration, and that is when the object is general indigence. There is another way in which public and visible charity might prove of permanent benefit to society, both for the relief of suffering and the increase of virtue among men ; such as the support of institutions for the cure or alleviation of disease, and for education.

231. Do you not conceive that provision might be made at the public expense for all those cases of calamity which are so entirely contingent that no foresight or previous calculation could be made to prevent their occurrence, or to provide for them when they do occur ?—I think that institutions ought to be provided for all those cases.

232. Do you see any objection to an enlarged liberal provision for the relief of the sick poor, in the way of distribution of medicines and dispensaries ?—I would object to any legal relief of the poor in their own houses. I would not object to dispensaries, the object of which is medicine ; but all that kind of household distress which falls in the way of the ordinary experience of families, I think should be left to be provided for by the families themselves, or by private charity.

233. Would you include, under the class of human misery which may be safely provided for, those cases of extreme weakness and destitution of old age which may be equally afflicting with bodily disease ?—I think that old age is so much the general lot of human nature that it would strike too much into the providential habits of the poor to make any thing like a regular and systematic provision for it.

234. If any such provision were made, might it not

also operate injuriously upon the filial habits and duties of the young ?—Yes ; I think it would tend to undermine the virtue of filial piety.

235. Amongst the establishments for which a safe provision might be made, would you include foundling hospitals, or any asylums for deserted children ?—I consider that that would be just a direct encouragement to immorality ; I know not a single instance of a deserted family in an unassessed parish in Scotland. There were three or four such instances occurred in my own parish in Glasgow, when I was there ; whereas I have often seen whole columns in the English newspapers, for example at Manchester, filled up with advertisements of runaway husbands.

236. Have you known any instances of it in assessed parishes in Scotland ?—Yes, in towns.

237. Do you not consider that to be very much peculiar to the manufacturing districts ?—I think it is altogether owing to the feeling that the family will be provided for.

238. Is the reputed father in Scotland called upon to maintain his illegitimate child ?—He is ; and there is a very remarkable testimony from one of our border parishes upon this subject. The Rev. Mr. Morgan, minister of Graitney, a parish contiguous to England, and separated from it only by a small stream, wrote me some years ago, that ‘ to females, who bring illegitimate children into the world, we give nothing. They are left entirely to their own resources. It is, however, a remarkable fact, that children of this description with us are more tenderly brought up, better educated, and, of course, more respectable, and more useful members of society than illegitimates on the other side of the Sark, who, in a great many

instances, are brought up solely at the expense of the parishes.'

239. May the cases which do prevail of infanticide, and the more numerous cases of convictions of females for the concealment of the birth of their children, afford a sufficient justification for the establishment of foundling hospitals, or a provision by law for deserted children?—It is certainly painful to contemplate even one case of infanticide; but I have no doubt that the wretchedness and the vices of society would be greatly augmented by the institution of a regular provision for illegitimate or deserted children.

240. Do you think the dangers to society on the whole would be greater in holding out what might be considered a bounty on the desertion of children, than any good which might be produced by preventing cases of infanticide, even if that good were to be attained?—I think it would be decidedly better for society that there should be no provision of the kind.

241. You would rely on the general feelings of human nature as a protection?—Yes, I would; and I hold it greatly better to trust human nature in this particular, than to thwart and interfere with her.

242. With respect to asylums for orphans, do you think they would come under the class of institutions for which you conceive a provision might be made?—I would hesitate more about an institution for orphans than the other institutions that have been mentioned; but still I am persuaded that orphans fare better on the whole in virtue of being left to the sympathy of their more distant relatives, and afterwards to the spontaneous patronage which their situation procures for them in society. This is, perhaps, the most ambiguous of the cases that have been proposed;

but, on the whole, I should feel inclined to decide against such an institution. There is a very delightful piece of information that I got upon this subject no earlier than yesterday, an experience with regard to Spitalfields :—‘ At the time of the severe distress in Spitalfields in 1816, they obtained, by application to Government, a quantity of stores, blankets, great-coats, etc., etc., among the rest a quantity of children’s shoes : it was determined to give these to the most distressed children in the various schools, and upon examination it was found that in the schools of Spitalfields and its vicinity, there were more than seventy orphans who, upon the death of their parents, had been taken into their houses by the poor, and had been supported by them.’ Upon the whole of this subject I would say, that I think there is a great deal of sound political economy in the New Testament, and that a lesson upon this very matter may be derived from the example of our Saviour. On two occasions, when the multitude were overtaken by hunger, He brought down food by miracle. It is quite evident that had this been His system it would have disorganized the whole of Judea, and the population would have run in multitudes after Him for the purpose of being fed ; and accordingly the third time He was applied to, He detected the sordid principle upon which they ran after Him, and said, ‘ You have come to me, not to see the miracles but to eat of the loaves and be filled,’ and instead of performing the miracle again, He put them off with a moral and spiritual advice. Now this stands remarkably contrasted with His example in reference to cases of disease. We do not read a single instance of His having sent a diseased petitioner uncured or disappointed away from Him ;

and we read often when they brought the lame and the lunatic, and the impotent folk, to be cured by Him, of His looking at them, and having compassion on them and healing them all. Now His doings, had all the eclat in them of a public charity, so that had He brought down food indefinitely by miracle, it would have disorganized and put into disorder the whole population; but no such effect would arise though He brought down health indefinitely by miracle. Every cure diminishes the amount of disease, whereas every individual act of relief does not diminish the amount of poverty. The will is upon the side of that indolence and dissipation which lead to poverty, so that the poverty will be indefinitely multiplied with the public provision that is made for it. But we shall never enlist the human will on the side of disease by all we can do for its relief. No man will break a limb for the benefit of a skilful amputation in an infirmary. We have a guarantee in the feelings of our sentient economy against any mischief being done, by providing indefinitely for the cure of disease; whereas we have no such guarantee, but the opposite, in devising any thing like public measures for the relief of general indigence.

243. You stated that there had been a great number of Irish in Glasgow, what effect has that had upon the Scotch poor with whom they have mixed?—I think upon the whole a deteriorating effect. Yet I must say I liked the Irish part of my parishioners. They received me always with the utmost cordiality, and very often attended my household ministrations, although Catholics.

244. Are you aware that the parishes in Scotland have ever endeavoured to prevent a settlement being

gained by three years' residence, by turning them out ?—That can be done, I understand, by a form of legal warning, without removal ; and even when the paupers of another parish reside with us, we do not incur the expense of removing them, but treat them as we should our own poor, and by drawing upon the kirk-session of the parish where they have their settlement, we get compensation for all our outgoings.

245. Must not the residence be an industrious one in order to entitle the person to a settlement ?—Yes, an industrious residence of three years.

246. Are you not of opinion that in Ireland, where the average of wages may be about eightpence a day, if there was a compulsory assessment the population would very soon consider themselves entitled to claim relief, according to the standard that they found observed in giving relief to a similar class in this country ?—I think it is very likely they would.

247. Then if that was likely to be the case in Ireland, where the wages average no more than eightpence a day, would not the effect be to throw almost the whole labouring population of the country as claimants upon the poor rate ?—Certainly.

248. The Committee, inferring from your evidence that you place no reliance upon the system of compulsory assessment for the improvement of the condition of the poor ; are there any other causes, or any other agencies which can be employed, which in your mind are calculated to raise and to improve their condition ?—I think the main cause for bringing the people into a better economical state is their Christian education, and by the establishment of schools well conducted, I should look hopefully to a better state of things in Ireland : I am led to this by the experience

of Scotland. All the other causes of amelioration which I have ever heard of I esteem to be of such subordinate importance, that they are nearly absorbed in what I conceive to be the main cause, that of bringing the people into a better moral state.

249. Do you not conceive that the removal of all obstacles which check or fetter industry, or all obstacles which prevent the accumulation of capital, of themselves of very minor importance, and subordinate to moral causes, are yet matters which it would be the duty of the Committee and of the Legislature to attend to?—I am not sanguine of a great result from either of those causes. It appears to me that there is a natural limit to the extension of trade; monopolies and other restraints do impose an artificial limit on the extension of our commerce and manufactures, which lies a certain but very little way within the natural limit. One great cause, I apprehend, of the commercial distress that took place some years ago, was the over-sanguine anticipation of an indefinite career for commercial enterprise, upon the removal of certain fetters which had before lain upon it, in consequence of which there was a great over-trading, and speculators came much sooner into contact with the natural limit than they at all anticipated.

250. Having stated in a former part of your evidence that what regulated the actual condition of the poor, independently of the moral causes, is the proportion that exists between the numbers of the people, and the means of employing capital productively in labour; are there not causes that will act upon the one or the other of those two principles?—I am disposed to count a great deal more on those moral causes which affect the number of labourers, than on the causes

which affect capital as a means of employing them ; capital does not admit of indefinite accumulation, and may press as inconveniently, in virtue of its excess, upon the business of the country, as the population does upon the food of a country ; if capital go beyond that excess, then it is necessarily wasted in losing speculations. I would not count, therefore, so much upon the extension of capital as political economists generally do for additional employment to the people.

251. What would you say with respect to the second principle, which is coupled with the extent of capital, namely, the means of employing it productively ?—With respect to the means of employing it productively, or in other words, so as that the capital shall be returned with a profit, this is not a thing which we have the indefinite command of. In virtue of additional capital embarked in the preparation of certain commodities, the market may be so glutted that the capital shall be completely lost in the consequent fall of prices.

252. Suppose that, by artificial means, the comforts and necessities of life are raised by taxation and other causes, do you not consider that that acts immediately upon the condition of the people, and that the removal of those causes would tend to improve that condition ?—It acts not on the condition of the people, but on the cultivation of the soil, and so on the means of maintaining them. The removal of these causes would certainly in the first instance be followed up by an enlargement of our agricultural produce, but whether this shall work a permanent improvement in the state of business depends altogether, I imagine, on their character and habits. Without a moral change in the population, any

enlargement of their comfort, resulting from the abolition of taxes and other restraints, will, I fear, be altogether temporary.

253. Supposing an artificial system of taxation, which had the effect of raising the price of bread, and that that taxation were withdrawn, which may be supposed to bring down bread to the value of potatoes, do you not conceive that in their command upon the diminished price of bread there would be an increase on the part of the poor of the means of consuming bread, and so of any other article, such as sugar?—The consequence would be that the poor, in the first instance, would be translated into better circumstances; but without a proportional change in their habits, their standard of enjoyment remains the same; and they, marrying according to that standard, are soon where they were again.

254. But if, contemporaneously with the removal of obstacles which prevent the consumption of commodities, you have also found means for raising the moral condition of the people, will not the attainment of the comforts of life be greatly facilitated by the alteration?—As a subsidiary to the great work of amelioration, I should not refuse any expedient that might be of effect for the interim and temporary improvement in the condition of the people. At the same time, the question throws me back upon an improvement in their habits as the only permanent cause that will maintain the peasantry in a comfortable and well-conditioned state.

255. In considering the state of a population, at any given time, or in any given place, do you see any connexion between the numbers and the area upon which those numbers stand, without reference to other

circumstances than can determine their physical condition?—The only connexion between numbers and areas which I can perceive is, that if two countries were of equal average fertility, and neither of them derived their supplies from abroad, the larger country would of course have the larger population. But the proximate cause of this is just the augmented means of existence; and to quit this obvious principle for any new category on the relation between numbers and area, appears to be no great improvement in political science.

256. Assuming the fertility of the soil or the capital to vary, has area taken *per se*, any possible connexion with the question?—I do not conceive that area can have any possible connexion with the question. I see no influence in mere area, unless it were to come to there being too little room for people to stand in, or to move about in with facility and convenience.

257. Passing from the question of capital, and the means of employment, to the question of numbers, has it ever occurred to you that by a removal of numbers, when the numbers are disproportioned to the capital, and the means of employing it, relief could be given in the shape of emigration?—There is no doubt that, as in the other case, temporary relief would be given, it being of no consequence whether the proportion be altered by increasing the supply of food to the same population, or by diminishing the population to the same supply of food.

258. Has there been any considerable emigration, within your observation, from Glasgow and its vicinity?—There was a considerable emigration from Glasgow some years ago, and a considerable movement towards emigration on the part of the people.

259. Was that carried on to any extent that produced a visible effect upon the condition of those that remained ?—I was not sensible of any effect produced by the emigration of those who actually went. I may here state that the appearance of a disposition to emigrate is very much magnified beyond, I think, the reality of their disposition. I remember, before I left Glasgow, that there were emigration societies, comprising altogether, if I am right, 4000 members, which of course would represent to the eyes of people at a distance the extent of the disposition to emigrate. I was waited upon by the deputies of that society, and requested to aid the business of their correspondence with London. I answered that I did not feel myself able to do any thing for the general associated body ; but that if they would detach all those members who belonged to the parish of St. John's, I would do what I could for them. They turned out to be nine in number ; I felt this to be manageable enough, and easily found means to obtain a collection for the expenses of their removal to Canada. When the men saw, however, that this emigration was looking at them in good earnest, they all, without one exception, chose to remain at home. There is often, I am convinced, the appearance of a disposition to emigrate much beyond the reality.

260. In the case of low wages and want of employment, such as you have described in Glasgow in the year 1817, do you conceive that emigration could be relied upon as a mode of relief, unless it were carried on to a very considerable extent indeed ?—My idea of emigration is somewhat analogous to what I expressed yesterday on the subject of temporary work for the poor in seasons of depression. The

expedient of emigration has the same advantage over a poor rate which the expedient of temporary work has : a poor rate, by supplementing the wages of defective labour, keeps all the workmen upon an overstocked or overdone profession, and so, by perpetuating the glut in the market, perpetuates the depression of their condition ; whereas by withdrawing so many of them to another work not professional, this no doubt saddles us with the whole expense of maintaining a certain number, but it will be found much cheaper than supplementing the defective wages of the whole, because, in point of fact, if we strike the wages of this extra professional work low enough, we shall find that much fewer people will offer themselves than we at first apprehend. Another great advantage of such an expedient is, that it affords a test by which we may estimate the extent and reality of the distress ; and it does appear to me that emigration may just do the same thing : few are found to avail themselves of extra professional work at low wages ; still fewer will avail themselves of emigration, this being against the whole grain and tendency of nature, unless where there is the pressure of very severe distress. I should therefore hold it a safe thing to propose emigration ; as far as it went it would lighten in the mean time an existing pressure, with the further advantage of appeasing the public imagination as to the extent and reality of the distress, because it would provide a test by which to measure these.

261. Assuming that the wages of labour in Britain are considerably higher than the rate of wages in Ireland, and that the difference of the rate measures the inducement which brings the Irish labourer into

Britain, were emigration applied upon a large scale to this part of the empire, would it not have a tendency, in raising wages here, to increase the inducement to Irish paupers to flock over ?—It certainly would have that tendency ; that is to say, were it applied to England, and not applied in the same proportion to Ireland.

262. If it were applied to Ireland would it not have a tendency to raise the rate of wages in Ireland, and to diminish the inducement to Irish emigration to this country ?—As far as it went, it would certainly have that tendency. I do not think it would be at all unsafe to propose it, on pretty liberal terms, even to the Irish population. I would not anticipate a very great amount of applications for emigration from the Irish people ; but as far as it went, it would certainly have the effect stated in the question. I may here be permitted to state what I have often considered as a very important principle in this matter : a very small variation in the numbers of the people is followed up by a much larger than a proportional variation in their wages, just as a very small change in the supply of necessaries is followed up by much larger than a proportional variation in their price. The fluctuation in the price of necessaries oscillates more widely in proportion to the variation in their supply than the fluctuation in the price of luxuries. Now the same thing, I apprehend, applies by a kind of reverse process to the price of labour. Employment being the medium through which people find their way to the necessaries of life, it observes the same law in the tendency of its price to vary with the supply of labour, that the necessaries of life themselves do ; or, in other words, a very small excess in the

population is enough to account for a very great and general depression in the economic condition of the people ; and, on the other hand, a very small abstraction of that excess has a great power in the way of raising the people to a fair and right level. This, among other things, is an argument upon the side of emigration, because, though I do not believe it would be availed of to any great extent, yet if we can get quit, in the mean time, of a small fractional proportion of the population, this would tell very much beyond the proportion of that fraction on the wages of labour in the country ; I must at the same time say, however, that I have an utter want of faith in the efficacy of emigration as a permanent scheme. As a temporary expedient for meeting that kind of temporary pressure to which a country is exposed when describing certain transitions, it might with all safety and advantage be resorted to, and that without an oppressive expense to the public, because, though set up on a large and national scale, much fewer would avail themselves of it than we are disposed to anticipate.

263. It is in evidence before this Committee, that at the present moment a very considerable change is in progress in the management of land in Ireland, leading to the dispossession of many tenants, and to a difficulty on their part of finding places of settlement elsewhere ; does not that constitute one of those transition cases to which emigration might be made safely applicable ? —I think it might help very essentially to smooth and facilitate that transition.

264. Where hand labour is superseded by machinery, or one description of machinery, imperfect in itself, is superseded by a more perfect principle ; would not

that also constitute one of the states of transition for the evils of which emigration would be a remedy ?—I certainly think so.

265. Do you not consider that recklessness and degradation, the consequences of poverty, involve a state of existence under which the prudential check is less liable to operate than in a community where the labouring classes are more enabled to maintain their own independence ?—I am inclined to think that recklessness and degradation are more the causes than the consequences of poverty, and that the restoration of the prudential check is more directly arrived at by the operation of a moral influence than by any economical arrangement.

266. When it is asserted or implied that the natural remedy for a redundant population is that diminution of their numbers which poverty and disease will ultimately effect, do you not think that, although this may be true as a general law, it has its exception in every country where civilization is too far advanced to allow of the alternative of permitting persons to perish from want ?—I think that every effort should be made for averting so dreadful an alternative, and that the perishing even of so much as one individual by want is not a thing that should be coolly acquiesced in, in any Christian land.

267. Do you not consider that the existence of pauperism, showing itself in reduced wages, and in absolute dependence on the part of the labouring classes, involves a state of things which makes it very difficult to apply efficient measures of relief, prior to the removal of such pauperism ?—I think that the difficulty of removing pauperism is generally over-rated, and that it presents no such difficulty as should

prevent the immediate adoption of the best measure for its permanent removal. I mean the education of the people. I by no means look upon emigration as indispensable ere we shall apply the main remedy, which I think would, even without emigration, work out a cure; but I certainly think that emigration might facilitate the transition to that better state of things which the moral causes and they alone can make permanent.

268. The distinction then that you draw is, that you recommend the use of emigration as a test of distress, and next as a temporary remedy for the evils of the transition state, and not as a permanent remedy upon which any reliance can be placed?—I do not think any reliance is to be placed upon it as a permanent remedy. Were an emigration scheme to become a constant part of the national system, the habit of the people would be accommodated thereto; and we should be kept in the state of a country at all times running over, a state that would imply the misery of an oppressed and straitened condition.

269. Are you of opinion that a measure of colonization upon an extended scale, applied as a national effort to the pauperism of the United Kingdom, especially of Ireland, would be a beneficial measure, facilitating the introduction of amended laws, and of a more judicious management of the poor, and if blended with a judicious education, would produce improved habits of thinking on the part of the lower classes, especially the younger portion of them?—I think it would be beneficial; but I do not think that the application of the general cure should wait for the scheme of colonization, though I think that such a scheme might operate as an auxiliary to the cure.

In this view, a scheme of colonization might be very useful.

270. Do you not think that in England the knowledge which an able-bodied pauper has of his right to claim relief under the poor laws necessarily indisposes him to take any efficient measures for sustaining an independent existence ?—Most certainly ; and on that very ground I could have no faith in the efficacy of emigration, as a scheme of relief for England, so long as the present system of its pauperism remains. I think that it is a very profitless kind of legislation, first to do, and then to undo, or first to stimulate population by a compulsory provision on the one hand, and then to draw them off by an artificial mechanism on the other. It is playing fast and loose in the business of managing a people, and can be productive of no good effect whatever. But if tacked to a scheme for bringing England under a retracing process, by which to conduct the country back again from a compulsory to a gratuitous system of relief, then this were a transition process, which might be very much facilitated by emigration, and particularly by empowering parochial vestries to offer to able-bodied labourers emigration as an alternative, an alternative which I think would not be accepted in one instance out of ten. The people would go back upon their own resources, and find a sufficiency in these resources far beyond what even themselves had calculated upon.

271. Do you consider that the reliance upon the general charity of the poor, one to another, which is known to exist in Ireland, produces in a certain degree, though not to the same extent, the consequences you have described as attending^r the recognized right to

relief in England?—I think there is a very great difference between the two cases; the dependence upon a legal charity does a great deal more mischief than that dependence on the voluntary aid of one's fellows; there is, beside this, a further difference between the dependence that mendicants have on the general charity of the country at large, and the dependence which neighbours have upon the kindness of the families in their immediate vicinity. In as far as the latter kind of dependence is concerned, it is limited by the operation of delicacies, which operate with great force in every plebeian neighbourhood, and prevent the mutual dependence from being carried too far. I besides think there is much less of misdirected charity under the voluntary than under the compulsory system. The poor know more of each other's merits and necessities, than either the wealthy or the members of any kind of public administration. I should hold that charity which passes and repasses among the contiguous families of a population, to be charity under the benefit of far more vigilant and salutary guardianship than can be secured by any artificial means whatever; so that the dependence on that charity meets with its check in the sharp-sighted and vigilant guardianship of immediate neighbours.

272. Is not the tendency of the system of the poor laws to produce pauperism, and the tendency of a system of extended charitable relief to produce mendicancy?—I think that it depends altogether upon the state of the population as to character and morals. It is a most important question for Ireland, whether you will submit for a time to its mendicity, or exchange that mendicity for a regular and com-

pulsory pauperism. Now, on many accounts, I would prefer the former to the latter alternative ; and one of my reasons is, that education will at length quell the one but not the other. It may be difficult to furnish the Committee with a satisfactory analysis of this matter : I feel assured that so it is, however much I may fail in expounding how it is. One thing is abundantly obvious, that the act of becoming a mendicant is one of unmixed degradation, and the self-respect inspired by education stands directly and diametrically opposed to it. It is not so with the act of becoming a pauper ; a state sanctioned by law, and in entering upon which, the consciousness of right, and the resolute assertion of it, awaken feelings that serve to temper the humiliation of charity. I think that this admits of historical illustration. The mendicity of Scotland gave way in a few years to its education. The pauperism and education of England have for many years advanced contemporaneously. I do not believe that the most efficient system of education which can be possibly devised will ever make head against the pauperism of England ; at the very most, it would but give rise to two populations, distinguished from each other by opposite extremes of character. I should therefore be exceedingly sorry if Irish mendicity were exchanged for English pauperism. I think that the floating mendicity of Ireland will fall under the operation of those moral causes which might be brought to bear upon it ; but if, in order to escape from this, you establish a law of pauperism, you will in fact establish so many parochial fixtures, a nucleus in every parish, around which your worst population will gather, and from which you will find it impossible to dislodge them. I should

exceedingly regret, that under the influence of an impatience to be delivered from this evil of mendicity, you should, in getting quit of that which is conquerable by education, precipitate yourselves into that which is unconquerable by education.

273. You said, in a former part of your examination, that you had no doubt that the compulsory system might be got rid of in England, and that the population of this country might be eventually brought to the operation of the system that prevails in Scotland; how do you reconcile that opinion with that which you have just now stated, that you consider the people of this country, having a right to the relief which they receive by law, are so fixed in the assertion and the claim of that right, that you do not think they could be induced to relinquish it?—Not unless the right be abolished. The retracing process supposes that all the new applicants shall be treated on the system of voluntary charity, and not on the compulsory system.

274. Do you contemplate, in the present artificial state of England, that there would be any hope, within any reasonable time, of accomplishing that?—I think, that with the disappearance of the existing generation of paupers, it might be accomplished. I should like to make one observation here, on the great incredulity which prevails with regard to the possibility of the retracing process taking effect in England. People reason on the want of natural affection, and the want of mutual kindness between poor and poor: now I think that these affections exist in as great strength in England as they do in any other country, and that the reason why they are not exercised is, because they are accompanied with a persuasion, in the minds of the people, that the objects of those affections are

otherwise provided for, and that when so there is no call for their exercise. The poor look towards something *ab extra*. It is not that they want mutual sympathy, nor is it that the system of compulsory assessment has extinguished this principle, but it has lulled it as it were asleep, by taking away the occasion for its exercise. Therefore, instead of saying that the system of pauperism has extinguished those good feelings in the breasts of Englishmen, I should rather say it has operated as a check upon the exercise of their feelings ; but the moment the check is removed, they will, by instant elasticity, break forth again, and be as vigorously exercised on their appropriate objects in England as in any other country of the world. There is one striking anecdote on this subject, pregnant, I think, with instruction, and for which I would refer to the very interesting work of Mr. Buxton on prisons : he states, that in Bristol, the constitution of the prison is different from the constitution of most of the prisons in England. The criminals have a very scanty allowance, rather inferior to the average of human subsistence, for their food. The debtors have no allowance at all, so that they are wholly dependent either upon their own relations or upon the random charity of the public. It has so happened, that both those resources have failed them ; but the knowledge of a human creature in the agonies of hunger, and in the immediate neighbourhood, was so intolerable to the other inmates that no instance of starvation has ever occurred in that prison, because the criminals were drawn forth to the exercise of compassion, and shared their own scanty pittance along with the debtors. Now, carry back this from prisons to parishes ; carry it back to a population who have

not undergone the depraving process that conducts them to a prison, and *a fortiori* we may be perfectly confident that there will be no such thing as starvation permitted in any neighbourhood, provided that the circumstances of the suffering individuals are known. Insomuch, that if any case of distress ever broke out in the parish over which I presided in Glasgow, it was enough to quiet all my apprehensions, that I knew it to be surrounded with human eyes and human ears. I never distrusted the promptitude of human feelings, and I always felt that every such case was followed up by the most timely forth-goings of aid and of sympathy from all the neighbours.

275. Can you develop a little more fully the historical circumstances of Scotland, during that transition which took place between the period referred to in the description you read of Fletcher of Saltoun, and the period described by Defoe?—It is a very frightful picture that Fletcher of Saltoun gives of the mendicity, when he talks of 200,000 in that state.

276. The question alludes more particularly with respect to the causes which led to the one state of things, and the remedies which were applied to bring society into the other state?—The causes which led to the state of things described by Fletcher, were the religious persecutions which the people underwent for about thirty years, the suspension of our scholastic mode of education; and I believe the want of an acceptable and efficient ministry of the Gospel; but, in point of fact, the law of parochial education was repealed at the Restoration by Charles II., and it was not resumed again till the Revolution, and during that time especially a most criminal and mendicant population had accumulated in Scotland.

277. Therefore it was to the abstraction of moral causes acting for good, that you attribute the degradation of the people, and to the re-introduction of those moral causes that you attribute their improvement ?—Yes ; the law of Scotland, favourable as it is to the mode of assessment, is not to be accredited with that improvement, for it took place before the principle of assessment had been introduced into half-a-dozen parishes.

278. Then you attribute the change that took place to no particular law, but rather to the operation of those causes, that of education especially, which took place after the Revolution ?—Entirely to the operation of those causes. In regard to the number of mendicants described by Fletcher ; he talks of 200,000, besides a great many getting but a scanty provision from the sessional funds. Now it occurs to me to say, that the number of our paupers at present is very much over-rated, even in the Supplementary Report of the General Assembly. It is there stated that there are 44,000 who were obtaining sessional relief at the time the Report was drawn up ; now they have made no distinction between the occasional and the regular poor ; and among those 44,000 there is at least one-half who do not get so much as ten shillings a year.

279. Does it appear from historical records that there was great increase of demand for the productions of the soil, and increase of demand for labour, after the Revolution of 1688 ?—I do not think that any very sensible enlargement took place in the economic condition of Scotland, till after the year 1745, or the second rebellion ; there was certainly a great enlargement afterwards, but it chiefly took place between the years 1745 and 1800.

280. Have you been able to trace any connexion in comparing the assessed and unassessed parishes of Scotland, between the introduction of an assessment, and the residence of the landed proprietors, or between the absence of assessment and absenteeism ?—I have not been able to trace any connexion of that sort ; I remember that a long time ago I resided for some months in one of the assessed parishes. The meetings were very little attended by the landed gentlemen ; chiefly by their agents and by the minister and kirk-session.

281. You said, in a former part of your examination, that you considered the compulsory system in Scotland much upon the increase, how do you account for that ?—I think that the first and most natural imagination upon this subject is, that if the existing means are pressed upon by the demands of parishioners, the most effectual method of meeting and neutralizing this is, just to increase the means, and having a law which empowers the increase of means, it appears to me very natural to suppose, that by extending the means we should meet the applications, and provide for the distress of the parish : it is a mistake, but a very natural mistake. Then there is another cause : non-residence has been a temptation, I may say a provocative, which has led to the introduction of assessments in many of our Scottish parishes. On the principle of equalizing the support of the poor among all the heritors, this mode has been resorted to, very much ultimately to the regret of the residing heritors, who have found that it would have been far better to bear the whole burden of the gratuitous, than their part only of the compulsory system.

282. Would not that be a reason for adopting the

voluntary mode of relief, instead of having recourse to the compulsory one?—Yes; but we have to come to that conclusion by an inferential process, which practical men in general do not make; they act more upon impulse than upon reason, upon the force of that consideration which is most obvious, and which first impresses itself.

283. Would not the success of the voluntary mode of relief mainly depend upon that extraordinary diligence used by persons to be found in the different parishes, and which you yourself applied in the case of the parish of St. John?—I think it does not depend upon that at all; the reason why I had to use diligence was, that I was surrounded by assessed parishes on all sides of me, and that I was also surrounded by the espionage of hostile observers. I was therefore under the necessity of making strict inquisition into every case, for the vindication of that step which I myself had gratuitously taken, and for the consequences of which I was personally responsible; but had I been placed in other circumstances, in the midst of un-assessed parishes, and surrounded by a natural economy all around me, I would say there was no such strenuousness of administration necessary, and that the success entirely depended upon the reflex influence of this state of things upon the habits and expectations of the people. The agency which I instituted in St. John's was more an agency of observation than one of positive efficiency: we did not originate any of those processes, which in a natural state of things, make up for the want of public charity; we only discovered them.

284. Is not the tendency of the assessment principle in Scotland not only to change the mode in which the

money is procured, but also at once to enlarge the circle of recipients, and to alter their character ?—Decidedly ; extending to cases that, in the unassessed parishes, we could never think of providing for, and in which the persons themselves would never think of making application.

285. Does not this circle also extend in assessed parishes in proportion as the assessment has been for a longer time introduced ?—Yes, uniformly so.

286. Do you object to a compulsory provision in Ireland for the employment of the people ?—Yes, I certainly would for the permanent employment of the poor.

287. If it appears that there are multitudes of able-bodied people out of employment in Ireland, and that there are many objects to which their labour could be profitably and advantageously applied, and which objects are nevertheless altogether neglected ; do you not think it might be desirable by law to collect funds for the sake of employing this at present unemployed and suffering population ?—It strikes me, that whatever employment is profitable and advantageous, will be found out by the capitalists of the land, and its not being undertaken save by Government is a presumption against the employment being profitable and advantageous.

288. If the fact is otherwise, if it appears from the Reports of many Committees of Parliament, that there are those undertakings in which capitalists might engage with profit, would you still, under those circumstances, retain your opinion against that employment ?—Against employment at the public expense, if calculated on as a permanent resource ; I should have no objection to it as a temporary expedient for

relieving those inconveniences, which are also temporary, and which attach to a transition state. The change which is now taking place in the agriculture of Ireland is a change producing inconvenience that will be but temporary, because it is a change I should imagine favourable to the increase of agricultural produce, and therefore securing a larger amount of the means of subsistence than under the present system, so that there are in Ireland capabilities in reserve which have not yet been entered upon, larger in proportion to the distance between the actual limit of its agriculture, and the limit to which it may be carried ; and in the development of these capabilities there will at length be abundant room not merely for the absorption of all the present surplus population; but for the comfortable maintenance, at length, of a larger population than is now in Ireland.

289. Do you not consider, that if there existed means of employment such as those suggested by the few last questions, that more benefit would be communicated to the poor by the employment of private capital seeking a profitable return, than by the compulsory employment of capital raised by taxation for the purposes of labour and charitable relief ?—I should feel disposed to confide all employments from which a profit is expected to private capital.

290. If a system of employment derived from taxation were introduced, do you not think that it would impede the employment of private capital for the same purpose ?—I should certainly be apprehensive of that result.

291. There is an observation made by Defoe upon this subject, in which he says, that ‘ to set poor people at work on the same thing that other poor people were

employed on before, and at the same time not to increase the consumption, is giving to one what you take away from another, enriching one poor man to starve another, putting a vagabond in an honest man's employment, and putting his diligence on the tenters to find out some other work to maintain his family.' Are those opinions in which you concur?—I think there is great truth and justice in the observation.

292. What numerical proportion of the population do you think ought to be in the course of education at school?—I think somewhat more than a tenth; the proportion, however, is affected by the length of the attendance in school; and I can imagine such improvement in the business of education, and the education thereby to be so expedited, as to render a less proportion necessary than one-tenth for the complete education of a people.

293. Have you compared the effects of education carried on through the agency and under the superintendence of central and charitable associations with a system of education which is more located in its character, and which is administered by those who have a direct interest in its success?—I certainly think that it is not in the power of charitable associations so thoroughly to pervade the land with education as might be done by what I would call the stationary apparatus of Scotland, consisting of schools erected in little vicinities all over the country; at the same time I think that these societies might be of great advantage in the way of giving the first impulse to education, and creating an appetite for it; but that societies never can thoroughly overtake the whole length and breadth of a land, and that we shall not

reach a full and entire system of education but by the means of permanently established schools.

294. Do you consider that, however unfit such charitable associations may be to carry on and conduct schools over the face of the land, they might be made available for the purpose of printing and publishing books, and communicating instruction in that way?—They certainly might be of very great use in that way. There is another use which I think they may be turned to ; if there be any thing defective in the mode of the established education, I think they might be useful in supplementing and stimulating the system by keeping up a wholesome reaction upon the established teachers.

295. Might they not also act usefully in establishing model schools for the instruction and training of masters?—Yes, I think they might be very beneficial in that way.

296. There appear to be three different species of education for the poor of a country : the endowed system, in which the whole expense of the school is maintained by the public ; the unendowed system, in which every thing is left to private effort, without any aid or direction ; and the combined system, between those two. In the first place, what do you conceive may be the advantages and the defects of a system of education wholly unendowed?—A system wholly unendowed will never originate education in a country ; it does not call out the people sufficiently. There is on this subject a very important principle, and which forms one of the strongest arguments, in my apprehension, that can be alleged, both for a scholastic and ecclesiastical establishment. I fear that Dr. Adam Smith has done great mischief by a most unfortunate generalization he has fallen into

upon this matter ; he seems to think that the articles of Christian and common instruction should be left to the mere operation of demand and supply, in the same way as articles of ordinary merchandise are, not adverting to the great distinction between the two. The sentient appetites and feelings of our nature secure a sufficient intensity of demand for the articles of mere physical gratification ; and to be sure, he did well in exposing the whole system of bounties and artificial encouragement, as what should be put away from the business of ordinary trade ; but he unfortunately extended the same principle to the articles of common and Christian instruction, and seemed to think that it partook very much of the odiousness and the mischief of a bounty to have endowed and privileged men whose business it was to meet the people with education, whether that education be considered as general scholarship or as Christian education. The distinction between that and an article of ordinary merchandise is, in proportion to our want of the one is our appetite for it, in proportion to our want of food is the intensity of the feeling of hunger ; but in regard to our appetite for knowledge, in proportion to our want of the article is our unconcern about it ; and the consequence is, that unless the people are operated upon aggressively by a body of philanthropists from without, or by the government from without, we shall never arouse them out either of the state of ignorance or of the state of irreligion which they are found in naturally.

297. Would the application of that principle lead you to adopt, as the proper system of education, free schools, in which the whole expense is paid either by local taxation or by the State, namely, a system

contrasted to that to which your last answer applied, that being an unendowed system, and this being a free system, or wholly endowed ?—I think the wholly endowed system may be applicable to a country, in the first instance : and thus it is that I rejoice in the efforts of those philanthropic societies, who have gone about with the offer of gratuitous education both in England and in Ireland ; but it strikes me that a wholly endowed system is highly inexpedient as a permanent system in a land. I would just read a single paragraph from a paper that I published on the subject in Glasgow, anterior to the erection of my parish schools in St. John's ; I wished to interest the liberality of my friends in the support of the parish schools, and the way in which I argue against a wholly endowed system is as follows :—‘ What is gotten for no value, is rated at no value ; what may be obtained without cost in money, is often counted unworthy of any cost in pains ; what parents do not pay for the acquirement of, children will not be so urged to toil for the acquirement of ; to be away from school, or to be idle at school when not a matter of pecuniary loss, will far more readily be a matter of connivance. There is no doubt a loss of other advantages, but these, under a loose and gratuitous system of education, will be but held in capricious demand, and in slender estimation. The only way of thoroughly incorporating the education of the young with the habit of families, is to make it form part of the family expenditure ; and thus to make the interest, and the watchfulness, and the jealousy of parents, so many guarantees for the diligence of their children. And for these reasons do we hold the establishment of free schools in a country to be a frail and impolitic

expedient for the object of either upholding a high tone of scholarship among our labouring classes, or of rendering the habit at all general, or of perpetuating that habit from generation to generation. And such a system has not a more adverse influence on the scholars than it has upon the teachers : let a man deal in any article whatever, and there is not a more effective security for the good quality of what he deals in than the control and the guardianship of his own customers ; the teacher of a free school is under no such dependence : it is true that he may be paid according to the proficiency of the learners, but the parent who can instantly withdraw his children is a far more jealous inquisitor into this matter than the official examiner, on whose personal interest at least there is no such powerful or effectual hold. And we repeat it, therefore, that carelessness on the part of the teacher, as well as a remiss and partial attendance on the part of the taught, is the likely fruit of that gratuitous system of education, the aspect and the tendency of which we are now employed in contemplating.' I may here add, that I think there were five wholly endowed schools in Glasgow when I first became connected with that place, and it quite accorded with our experience, that by far the most remiss and unprosperous style of education went on there, in so much that the authorities of the place, with great propriety, abolished those schools, and applied the funds to various parishes, for the purpose of erecting schools in accordance with the general system that obtains in Scotland.

298. Is that general system to which you have last adverted a system combined of a certain portion of endowment, and a certain portion of contribution on the part of the scholars ?—Yes ; so as to form a half-

way meeting as it were between Government and the population.

299. Are the schools under the Scotch parochial system built at the public expense ?—Not directly at the expense of Government ; the law is that the heritors of the parish shall erect a school, and a school-house, and keep them in repair ; and that the school-master, over and above, shall be provided with a certain quantity of ground for a garden, and have a salary ; and the maximum and minimum of that salary are defined, I think, by the Act of 1803.

300. Is that duty generally executed ?—Universally, I am sure, in the Lowland parishes ; and I believe universally all over Scotland.

301. Is that nearly the system, or do you know any thing of the system of education which is sanctioned by the laws, and which is carried on to a great extent in New England ?—I am not sufficiently acquainted with that system to answer the question.

302. Is the system pursued in Scotland this, that each parish or district is bound to keep up, according to its extent, a school, or number of schools ; and that those schools are supported by local assessment upon the inhabitants of those parishes or districts ?—The number of schools is not according to the extent of the parish ; the law only provides that there shall be one school in each parish ; the expense, as far as the school is endowed, lies exclusively upon the landed proprietor. I call it an instance of partial endowment, because the income of the teacher is made up of a salary and fees, with the advantages of a school, school-house and garden.

303. Can you inform the Committee what is the general amount of the fixed salary given to the master ?

—The maximum and minimum are from £20 to £30 a year ; but it depends upon the price of grain. There was some sort of provision, that at the end of twenty-five years there should be a new estimate formed, according to this price.

304. Are the Committee to understand that the expense of providing a house for the residence of a master, and the land attached to that house, is also supplied by local assessment paid by the heritors ?—Quite so.

305. In what mode are the fees fixed ?—They are paid, generally quarterly, by the parents of the children.

306. Are those left to be fixed upon the ordinary principles of supply and demand, or are they fixed by any regulation of the heritors ?—They are fixed by the heritors, in conjunction with the minister.

307. Do you know what the average amount of the entire emoluments of the schoolmasters may be taken at, comprehending the salary, the value of the house and garden, and the fees ?—That varies in different parishes according to the population. I fear that the average income of a schoolmaster, taking Scotland all over, is not more than £50 a year ; and I consider that a great deal too little. I do not know a more important functionary than the parochial schoolmaster, and I should like exceedingly to see that, by an increase of salary, and a proportional increase of fees, he was elevated to a far more respectable condition of independence than he at present enjoys.

308. Do you know what is the average amount of the quarterly fees ?—That varies very much too ; but taking the general run of country parishes, about two shillings a quarter for reading, three shillings

for reading and writing, and four shillings for reading, writing, and arithmetic. I give this answer, because in framing my own schools in St. John's, I fixed upon those fees, and also provided a salary of £25 a year to each of the schoolmasters, and I did it in the wish to assimilate the economy of a town parish as much as possible to that of a country parish, to give the children the same advantages in regard to the cheapness of education; that rate was fixed upon a deliberate survey of the state of the matter all over Scotland.

309. Is not the course of education in some instances carried much further than mere reading, writing, and arithmetic, in the parochial schools?—Most of our parish schoolmasters can teach Latin, and generally when they are advertised for, Latin is stated as one of the qualifications that will be required.

310. Do those parochial schools then, in the case of a boy of superior ability and energy of character, afford him the means of acquiring knowledge that may lead him to the University?—The transition is immediate from most of the country schools to the University.

311. You were understood to state, that the extension of education cannot be left to the regulation of the ordinary principles of demand and supply, because the desire to obtain it may be rated at an inverse ratio to the real necessity of the party for it. Is not that principle much modified by the circumstance that the demand for education does not depend solely upon the desire of the parties who are themselves to receive it, but upon the desire of their parents and relatives that they should receive it?—I think that the want of education extinguishes not merely the desire on the part of him who is to be the subject of

education, but also the desire on the part of his natural guardians and superiors, because they, partaking in the general state of ignorance, and having little value for knowledge themselves, have a proportionably low estimate of the importance of that knowledge for their children.

312. Have you found that among ignorant and vicious parents, a low estimation of education for their children is very prevalent?—There are not many instances of that in country parishes in Scotland. The great good of the parochial system is, that it created an appetite which extended beyond even its own means of supplying it. In many instances, where there is a parish of 5000, 6000, or 8000 people, the established parochial school cannot dispense education to the children of so great a number; but a taste and a demand for education have now been so infused by the parochial system into the general mass, that the demand of the people alone is adequate, in country parishes, to make good the deficiency of the established means, and accordingly, beside the established parish school, there are in many of our populous parishes, three, four, or five schools that are carried on purely on the strength of the principle of demand and supply; but then this demand has been previously created by the operation of the parochial system.

313. Is education as cheaply supplied by those additional schools as in the parochial schools?—I believe, in general, not so cheaply; or if so cheaply, it is education of an inferior quality.

314. However extensive a parish is, is there only one parochial school?—Only one parochial school; and accordingly in Glasgow, and in all our large towns

where they have fallen away from the benefit of the parochial system, although the Scottish habit is kept up in considerable strength, yet it has so far decayed that a great many of the Glasgow population I found grew up without acquiring the art of reading at all.

315. Is there only one school in an extensive country parish ?—There is only one parochial school however extensive the parish may be.

316. Is that the case in the Highlands ?—In the Highlands there is only one parochial school in each parish ; there may be endowments from other sources, but those endowments form no part of the regular establishment of schools.

317. Do you conceive that it would be an improvement if each parish was compelled to keep up a number of schools, proportioned to the extent of the parish and the amount of the population, where one school was not sufficient ?—It was to supply the want of that that I succeeded in erecting no less than four parish schools in St. John's, requiring the cost of about £1000 for each, that is to say, £500 for each fabric, and £500 for the endowment of a salaried teacher.

318. Is the school instruction, given in the Highlands of Scotland, given in the English language, or is it given in the Gaelic language ?—It is given in both ; and my impression is, that it is given more in the English language than in the Gaelic in the regular parish schools ; but there has been a Gaelic School Society instituted, the object of which was to set agoing circulating schools, for the purpose of filling up the large intermediate spaces between the stationary parish schools, and it is a principle of theirs, that they teach the Gaelic along with the English ; I believe

that that example has operated usefully upon the parish schools. There was a jealousy which produced an attempt towards the extinction of the Gaelic language, just as there was an attempt towards the extinction of all the Highland peculiarities, as displayed in Acts of Parliament against the Highland dress ; it was in the spirit of that jealousy that the teaching in Gaelic was discouraged. It has now subsided, however, yet Gaelic is more plentifully supplied by the Gaelic School Society than by the parish schools. But our additional schools, that we are at present erecting under the patronage of the General Assembly, provide for the teaching of Gaelic as well as English.

319. Does the use of Gaelic, at the present day, operate to impart instruction better among the Highlanders ?—It has given them an additional taste and demand for knowledge in general ; so that in virtue of that change they are more acquainted with English books and English literature than they were before.

320. At what age are the children generally taken into the parochial schools ?—It depends very much upon the parents, and perhaps upon the modes of industry that prevail in particular parts of the country ; I would say they enter generally at five years of age.

321. At what age are they generally transferred to the University ?—I think that the students now do not go to the University so early as they used to do, though they still go a great deal too early. I suppose the average age may be fourteen or fifteen.

322. Does any considerable proportion of the population of Scotland remain uneducated ?—There is a certain proportion in the large towns, and a proportion that has been pretty well ascertained now in the Highlands and Islands, but I would say that

the habit is quite universal in Lowland country parishes.

323. Are you not of opinion, that the operations of this Gaelic Society have tended rapidly though indirectly to the extinction of the Gaelic language?—I am not aware that they have had that effect.

324. Have not they operated considerably to give an increased knowledge of the English language?—They have, certainly.

325. Do you consider it probable that the English and the Gaelic language will continue to go on *pari passu* for any considerable time in the country?—The retrogression, on the part of the Gaelic language, is very slow; the line of demarcation between the Gaelic and the English being still, I believe, very much what it was fifty years ago. We can ascertain that from a circumstance that is noticeable enough; in the Gaelic parishes, the minister is bound to preach in Gaelic once every Sunday. There has certainly been a slow progress in a northern direction towards preaching exclusively in English, but the progress is exceedingly slow. In a large period of time, however, the tendency is to the subsiding, and at length to the ultimate disappearance of the Gaelic language.

326. Do you think that the course which has been taken in the management of Highland property has tended materially to diminish the number of those that speak the Gaelic language?—I should think so.

327. Has it ever occurred to you that the extension of paper currency has had the effect of extending the knowledge of the English language?—I am not aware of it.

328. If a system of partial endowment with reference to education be pursued, instead of one that is

wholly gratuitous, must not a certain proportion of the population, who are not able to pay the established fees, be left, under this medium system of education, without the means of instruction ?—I am not inclined to regulate that matter on the presumption that any considerable number of the people would be unable to provide for the education of their children, nor am I fond of any thing like a regular and public provision for their gratuitous education : it may prove a stepping-stone to pauperism ; it may in one way lessen the amount of education ; for suppose there is a certain number of places which are provided for to be given away gratuitously, then there might be an expectancy for those places far beyond the number of them ; and I have known them in Glasgow wait so long, that many outgrew their opportunities, and rose up to manhood without receiving any education at all. I think that such a provision proceeds on too prevalent a tendency to underrate the capabilities of the lower orders. Taking the general habit of the Scottish peasant, the education of his children forms one of the regular outgoings of his family ; he counts education worth its price, and that price, generally speaking, is cheerfully paid by him.

329. Is there generally among the poorer classes in Scotland any family education going on, either previous to the children going to school or while they are at school ?—I am not aware that there is much of the mere education of letters ; there is, though I am sorry to say it has declined to a considerable extent, a habit that was bequeathed to us from former days, that of a domestic religious education on the Sabbath.

330. Have you ever found or heard that poor persons flow into parishes where there are endowed

schools, for the purpose of obtaining education gratuitously ?—No ; I do not think that that forms a moving force of sufficient power to induce the movement of a family from one parish to another. It forms so small a fraction of the whole expenditure of a family, that I should not expect, and I have never heard of any instance of it.

331. Is the exact period of the introduction of the Scottish parochial system known ?—I would say, though I am not able to state the precise year, that it is very nearly coeval with the Scottish Reformation.

332. You stated that there were some funds of endowed schools in Glasgow, transferred by the municipal body to other schools ; what was the right which the municipal power had of so doing ?—I presume that the magistrates had the power of doing it, and I think they made a very salutary change by it in the system.

333. Do you consider that the Scottish parochial system has had any considerable effect in forming the character of the people, and in giving them the prudential habits you describe ?—There is a charm annexed by many to the mere education of letters ; I do not hold that this of itself can achieve much for a people ; in Scotland it has been made the vehicle of education of a higher description, even that of religious principle.

334. Is the introduction of religious principle into the schools of Scotland connected with any authority or superintendence exercised by the clergy, or does it depend upon the parochial system itself, independently of such clerical interposition ?—I should think that even apart from clerical interposition, a school might be productive of salutary effects, provided it

were well constituted, and that the school-books were well ordered ; but in point of fact there is a very close affinity between the parish minister and the parish school ; and besides, there is an annual examination of all the schools within the bounds of the Presbytery, conducted by a committee of their number, and made the subject of an annual report.

335. Does religious instruction form part of the education ?—I would scarcely say that religious instruction in a formal or separate way formed part of our school education, but that a religious influence is secured in schools, because the Bible is generally a class-book, and the national catechism is also taught.

336. Is that part of the education carried on through the agency of the schoolmaster, or under the control and superintendence of the minister of the parish ?—It is carried on under the immediate agency of the schoolmaster. The minister may exercise an habitual inspection as he chooses, and when he does so, he, generally speaking, is very much welcomed by the schoolmaster ; and besides that, there is the annual examination I just now adverted to.

337. Is the schoolmaster in any degree under the authority of the parochial minister ?—Not properly under the authority of the parochial minister ; but were there any thing exceptionable, either in the mode of education or in the character of the schoolmaster, he could be brought before the Presbytery, and certainly might have complaints preferred against him there, which, if substantiated, would infer his deposition from his office.

338. Do you connect any important consequences with the locality of those schools, their being fixed in

the parishes, and the school-houses being provided, and thus by external signs, the subject of education being constantly presented to the minds of the people ? —I think that is of very great consequence, in as far as the amount of the education is concerned. With the permission of the Committee I will read a short paragraph on that subject from the paper adverted to already. Some may think it a fine and shadowy, but I consider the principle there noticed as having quite a substantial and practical influence.

‘The universality of the habit of education in our Lowland parishes is certainly a very striking fact, nor do we think that the mere lowness of the price forms the whole explanation of it. There is more than may appear at first sight in the very circumstance of a marked and separate edifice standing visibly out to the eye of the people, with its familiar and oft-repeated designation. There is also much in the constant residence of a teacher, moving through the people of his locality, and of recognized office and distinction amongst them ; and perhaps there is most of all in the tie which binds the locality itself to the parochial seminary, that has long stood as the place of repair for the successive young belonging to the parish ; for it is thus that one family borrows its practice from another, and the example spreads from house to house, till it embrace the whole of the assigned neighbourhood, and the act of sending their children to the school passes at length into one of the tacit but well understood proprieties of the vicinage, and new families just fall as if by infection into the habit of the old ones, so as in fact to give a kind of firm mechanical certainty to the operation of a habit, from which it were violence and singularity to depart ; and in

virtue of which education has acquired a universality in Scotland which is unknown in the other countries in the world.'

339. How are the masters chosen, and how are their qualifications decided upon?—There is an advertisement of the vacancy, and there is a day for the examination of candidates, who are required to bring their testimonials, and who are subjected to an examination at the sight of the heritors and minister.

340. By whom is the examination conducted?—In general, I think, by the clergymen; but they may call in the aid of examiners; it is an examination which is held in the presence of the electors, who consist of the heritors, along with the minister.

341. Are they all the heritors, or only the heritors possessing a certain qualification?—The Act, I think, of 1803, defines the qualification of an elector; at present, I have forgotten the amount of it.

342. Do you consider that that system of local election has operated so as to procure the services of persons duly qualified for the discharge of the duties of schoolmaster?—It has certainly done so in Scotland, generally speaking.

343. Would you be inclined to prefer such a system to any system of direct nomination, independently of the election of those who paid the income of the schoolmaster?—I can suggest no improvement on the method of election in Scotland.

344. Is the modern system of instruction, which is called Bell's, or Lancaster's, much practised in the large schools of Scotland?—In the larger schools it is introduced; but it has not, excepting in a very few instances, superseded the personal inspection of each scholar by the schoolmaster. The monitorial system

has been introduced to a certain degree ; but not so far as it has been carried in England.

345. Where the population is not very large, do you conceive that in the older system of education there are moral advantages from the more immediate superintendence of the master, which form a compensation for the loss of time in the one system as compared with the other ?—I think that both might be combined ; and that great mischief is done to the cause of education, when a school is of such extent, that the monitors stand completely between the head-teacher and the scholars.

346. Has it not, in some instances, a tendency to replace the moral influence by a process merely mechanical ?—Yes ; and I do not think that any mechanical process can make up for the loss of the moral influence ; at the same time, much use might be made of the systems of Bell and Lancaster. I have known some able and skilful teachers avail themselves of the system to such an extent, as to enable them to do justice to a school of 150.

347. From the general rapidity of instruction which is connected with the system of Bell and Lancaster, do you not think there is a facility given, and a necessity created, for the enlargement of the circle of education ?—I certainly do think that now, in consequence of the improvements which have taken place in education, the old course of it will not suffice to fill up the number of years that used to be devoted to education ; and that in the same time, a much greater amount of knowledge may be acquired now than formerly.

348. Do you conceive that in schools, such as the parochial schools of Scotland, there might be instruction introduced, bearing upon the practical interests

of the people, such as works upon the evils of combination, or explaining familiarly the principles upon which the wages of labour depend, or the effects of machinery in its immediate and in its ultimate consequences, and other subjects of that description?—It is a great improvement upon the old practice to have books that come down to the understandings of the young people; but I am not aware that those subjects could be thus brought down to the understandings of children so young as those that repair to what I may call the primary schools. I think that those subjects may be addressed to even the lowest of the people; but in a more advanced state with respect to age. I know that in the mechanics' school of Edinburgh, some of the more interesting topics of political economy have been introduced with very great advantage, and in such a way as to have a tranquillizing effect upon the minds of the people.

349. Had you at Glasgow any portion of your parishioners in St. John's of a religion differing from the Established Church of Scotland?—A good many; it was one of those parishes in which, from the population having outstripped the established means for their instruction, there were very few indeed who belonged to the Established Church of Scotland.

350. Were there any Roman Catholics?—A good many Roman Catholics.

351. Were any of those Roman Catholics in the progress of education within your view?—There happened to be one school very numerous attended, to the extent of 300 scholars, within the limits of the parish of St. John's; it was a school which, along with two others, was supported by the Catholic School Association that was formed in Glasgow, and we made

what we thought a very good compromise with the Catholic clergyman ; he consented to the use of the Bible, according to the authorized version, as a school-book, we consenting to have Catholic teachers, and upon that footing the education went on, and went on, I believe, most prosperously, and with very good effect. From the mere delight I had in witnessing the display and the exercise of native talent among the young Irish, I frequently visited that school, and I was uniformly received with the utmost welcome and respect by the schoolmaster. I remember, upon one occasion, when I took some ladies with me, and we were present at the examination of the school for about two hours, he requested, at the end of the examination, that I would address the children : I felt a kind of momentary embarrassment at the proposal ; I was resolved, however, to address them as I would any Protestant children, and accordingly did address them, for perhaps a quarter or nearly half an hour, urging upon them that Scripture was the alone rule of faith and manners, and other wholesome Protestant principles. The schoolmaster, so far from taking the slightest offence, turned round and thanked me most cordially for the address I had given.

352. That schoolmaster being a Roman Catholic ?— That schoolmaster being a Roman Catholic ; it really convinced me that a vast deal might be done by kindness, and by discreet and friendly personal intercourse with the Roman Catholics. I may also observe, that whereas it has been alleged that under the superintendence of a Catholic teacher there might be a danger of only certain passages of Scripture being read, to the exclusion of others, as far as my observa-

tions extended, he read quite indiscriminately and impartially over Scripture ; I recollect that day in particular, I found him engaged with the first chapter of John.

353. Did you meet with any contradiction on the part of the Roman Catholic clergy of Glasgow ?—Not in the least, for the clergyman was a party in the negotiation ; he attended our meetings, and there was a mutual understanding between the clergyman and the members of the committee : nay, a good many members of the committee were themselves Roman Catholics, and I remember when I was asked to preach for the Roman Catholic School Society, the committee came and thanked me for my exertions, and more particularly the Roman Catholic members of that committee, who were present at the sermon.

354. Do you consider that the success of that experiment was owing wholly or in any degree to their reliance upon the absence of any indirect object on your part, or any attempt to interfere with the religious faith of the Roman Catholic children in the way of proselytism ?—Had they suspected any sort of attempt that was obnoxious to their feelings, they of course would not have sent their children to the school.

355. Was not the system of education which you represent as having so very much raised the character of the Scotch people, a very decidedly religious education ?—Decidedly, and there is no doubt that it was with a view to the religion of the people that those schools were originally instituted ; I have no doubt that it was a desire for their religious instruction that formed the great moving force on the part of the clergy and the fathers of the Scottish Reformation, which led to the establishment of those schools.

356. Was it not, in fact, a system which produced a people whose instruction in Christianity was of a much more perfect kind than their instruction in other matters?—I ascribe the religious influence of our schools to the circumstance of the Scriptures being a school-book. When I spoke of direct religious instruction, I meant to say that there was not, to the best of my recollection, any separate day or any separate meeting for the exclusive object of religious instruction, but that, in point of fact, the reading of the Bible, and also a daily examination of the children upon the catechism, stand incorporated with the general system of the school.

357. Do they not form the major part of it?—I will scarcely say they form the major part, because the catechism does not occupy more perhaps to each individual than a very few minutes; and with regard to the reading, it is, in my opinion, a bad plan to make the Bible so very elementary a book, that scholars have to spell and mis-spell, and hammer their way to the words of it; the Bible, therefore, should be chiefly read by the higher classes. The general course of our country schools consists of the alphabet, two spelling-books, the easier and more difficult; the New Testament read at a distinct class, and earlier than the Bible class, which has lessons from the whole Scripture; besides these, there is a lesson-book, called the *Collection*, consisting of miscellaneous pieces from various authors; I have also seen abridged histories used as school books.

358. Have you any extracts from the New Testament, such as the parables and the miracles?—We have often extracts of that sort in our spelling-books.

359. Do you then consider a competent knowledge

of the Scriptures on the part of the population of a country, necessary to its moral well-being?—Decidedly so.

360. Have you read a Report of the Select Committee of this House, upon the subject of the education of the lower classes?—I have.

361. What observations would you make to the Committee upon the principles laid down in that Report, which, whilst it connects religious instruction essentially with the principles of national education, in order to meet the difficulties of a mixed community, leaves that religious instruction which is rendered absolutely necessary under the supervision of the respective ministers of the various denominations?—My approbation of the leading principle in that Report depends upon the construction which is given to it. ‘Resolved, That this Committee, with reference to the opinions above recorded, consider that no system of education can be expedient, which may be calculated to influence or disturb the peculiar tenets of any sect or denomination of Christians.’ If it be meant by this clause that there shall be no compulsion on Catholics to attend the Scriptural class, I quite agree with it; but if it be meant by this clause that in deference to any principle or inclination of theirs there shall be no Scriptural class open to the demand of every parent who may choose that his children may attend it, to that I would not agree, and on this matter I would hold no negotiation with any party whatever; but instituting a school on what I judge to be the best constitution for one, I would hold it forth to the free choice of all the parochial families, and I think that a Scriptural class should be the integrant and indispensable part of every such school.

362. Are the Committee then to understand that you consider the system of education would be incomplete without the establishment of a Scriptural class in each school, but that you consider it would be inexpedient to render the attendance upon such Scriptural class compulsory upon the parties?—I would not have any part of the education given at the parish school made compulsory; they should no more be compelled to attend the Bible class than to attend the reading or arithmetic class, and the Bible would of course fall to be read by the more advanced scholars. I cannot answer for what the Catholics will do, though I have a very strong opinion upon what they ought to do. If they do not attend the Scriptural reading that is going on in a school so constituted, then I think the districts which they occupy should be laid open to the influence of all that general religious activity that is now expatiating freely over the length and the breadth of Ireland. My idea of the perfection of an ecclesiastical system lies in this, that in the first instance there should be an establishment, but that establishment constantly operated upon, stimulated and kept on the alert by the zeal and activity of an energetic, active, and unconstrained dissenterism; and I have a parallel idea to this in reference to a scholastic system that there should be an apparatus of stationary schools, but if those stationary schools are not working the effect which is desirable, and which effect is, that the whole young population of the country should be leavened with Scriptural knowledge, then I say that with reference to those districts of country where this deficiency prevails, there should be free scope and encouragement given to the same sort of active

and zealous exertion on the part of religious philanthropists, whether acting individually or in societies, and that in all such places there should be full and free encouragement given to the talents and the energy and the competition of private adventurers.

363. By a Scriptural class, do you mean a class meeting on ordinary school-days, and at ordinary school-hours, or would you apply that denomination to a class which met on special days fixed for that purpose?—I would greatly prefer that the Scriptural class should be taught every day of the week; I should consider it very defective to confine the reading of the Scripture to one or two days of the week.

364. But whether upon one or more days of the week, or every day, do you still think that no compulsion ought to be used, and no regulation enforced by authority to render the attendance upon that class a *sine qua non*?—Certainly not.

365. Do you not consider that the principle of compulsion must, in a divided religious community, where part of the population are Roman Catholics, indispose persons who might otherwise be induced to read the Scriptures from such a study?—I think it is the likeliest of all methods for limiting and preventing the spread of Scriptural education to attach any thing like compulsion to it. As I have been questioned generally with respect to the Report of the Committee, I will beg leave to say that in regard to the authorized and Douay version, the difference between them is not so great as to make it a thing of practical importance which of them should be used, though that, in point of decorum and good taste, it were better that the school Bible should be our authorized version, and that the Catholic priest would

evinced his wisdom and liberality by making no objection to it.

366. If an objection is made upon the ground of difference of version, do you not conceive that the permission of reading the Douay version is a greater gain than the gain that might be derived from an attempt to enforce the reading of the established version?—Were I the Protestant minister of an Irish parish, and were the alternative set before me whether it shall be the Douay version or no Scriptural reading at all, I should certainly prefer the Douay version. There is one part of this Report which perhaps I do not well understand, where it is said, ‘That it is the opinion of this Committee that it be the invariable rule in such schools of general instruction that the scholars shall attend on Sunday at their respective places of worship, unless prevented by some sufficient excuse’; and this regulation is enforced by a subsequent one, ‘That it is the business of the Board of Education to receive returns duly certified of the attendance of children at school, and of their attendance at Divine worship, and at the times appropriated to separate religious instruction’; I am doubtful of the soundness of such a regulation. It is not necessary for my argument to define in what direction the proselytism is going on, whether from Protestantism to Catholicism, or reversely; but it appears to me that the Board of Education is, upon the principles of this Report, charging itself with the duty of constraining the attendance of children at school, at their respective places of Divine worship. Now I can conceive that in the progress of light and of conviction, there may be a sort of intermediate state on the part of the population who are making the transition, and

in virtue of which they perhaps cease their attendance from that which was formerly their place of worship, and have not yet begun a regular attendance upon that which may be eventually their place of worship ; I think, therefore, the Board of Education would stand charged with a duty which may operate as a barrier in the way of the free circulation of light and of sentiment through the land.

367. Do you conceive that that disadvantage is sufficient to outweigh the positive advantages that might be derived from requiring attendance at Divine worship, as a principle to be enforced and connected with school education ?—I certainly do think that it would, and that it were better if the Board of Education did not charge itself with any compulsory power in that matter.

368. Are you then of opinion that the whole matter of religious instruction should be limited to providing a Scriptural class in all the schools, and then leaving the course of events, the progress of knowledge, and the anxiety for religious information, to work out their own consequences ?—I at present think so ; although for the sake of a more full and distinct explanation on this subject, I will, with the permission of the Committee, offer a supplementary paper in addition to my oral evidence. There is another part of the Report which I feel doubtful of, where it speaks of those schools being supported from Parliamentary aid. I would certainly prefer an establishment for the support of those schools in the way in which they are provided for in Scotland, by parochial assessment ; and if I may be allowed to state, in connexion with this, a way in which you might meet, and satisfactorily meet, a very general feeling in the public mind, on

account of which feeling I am a little apprehensive that Government may precipitate itself into a scheme of poor laws ; I am inclined to think that there is something radically wrong in the attempt to force beneficence by law, and that it should never be made, save for such objects as might publicly and fully be provided for without detriment to society. General indigence I hold not to be an object of that kind, though I should have no objection to a compulsory tax both for the relief of what may be called institutional disease, and for the establishment of a religious education. Now I would not object to absentees being taxed in a certain proportion above the resident gentry for the objects now specified, for hospitals, churches and schools ; I should be happy if such a tax would satiate the public indignation against them, for I feel strongly apprehensive lest that indignation should prompt a tax upon them for the expense of general pauperism ; I feel no tenderness for them, but if such shall be the application of a tax on absenteeism, I should dread a very sore mischief to the population at large ; whereas it strikes me that there would be a peculiar propriety that as they withdraw from the population of Ireland the moral influence of a residing gentry, they should pay it back in kind by contributing more largely than the other landholders of Ireland to the moral influence of a vigorous and good scholastic system. I hold that the essential principles of such a question may be as effectually studied on a small scale as on a large, just as we can study mechanics better by the inspection of a small model than by the survey of a large machine, or as the results of an experimental farm might be turned into universal principles in the science of

agriculture. Now I have noticed so often in the separate parishes in Scotland, that it was the desire to punish absentees which has been the moving force that led to the establishment of compulsory assessment, that I should be apprehensive for Ireland of the same consequences in the country at large.

369. Then the objection you have taken is rather to the evil consequences of the expenditure of the tax when raised, than any objection to the imposition of a peculiar tax upon the absentees?—I have no objection to a peculiar tax upon the absentees; any objection I have against a compulsory provision for pauperism is not to save the pockets of the wealthy, but to save the principles and the character of the poor. May I be permitted to say upon this subject, with reference to the difficulties between Catholics and Protestants, I have felt those difficulties so very conquerable by friendship and kindness, that I feel more and more impressed with the importance of a good Protestant clergy in Ireland. I think, that with good sense and correct principle on the part of the Established ministers, a right accommodation on this subject would not be difficult in any parish. I hold the Established Church of Ireland, in spite of all that has been alleged against it, to be our very best machinery for the moral and political regeneration of that country. Were it to be overthrown, I should hold it a death-blow to the best hopes of Ireland. Only it must be well manned; the machine must be rightly wrought, ere it can answer its purpose: and the more I reflect on the subject, the more I feel that the highest and dearest interests of the land are linked with the support of the Established Church, always provided that church is well patronized. I know

not what the amount of the Government patronage is in the Church of Ireland, but in as far as in the exercise of that patronage, they, instead of consulting for the moral and religious good of the people, do, in the low game of party and common-place ambition, turn the church livings into the bribes of political subserviency ; they, in fact, are the deadliest enemies of the Irish people, and the most deeply responsible for Ireland's miseries and Ireland's crimes.

370. You say you would not make the Scriptural class compulsory any more than the writing class, or the arithmetic class, at the same time you stated you would lay down for your school that system which you thought essential, in which system a Scriptural class formed a part ; how would you practically arrange the machinery of your system, so as to allow the attendance upon the Scripture class to be optional ?—I know there are a great many classes in a Scottish school, and that in like manner, as there are many that attend the reading classes and do not attend the writing and arithmetic classes, so I can conceive it a very possible thing that scholars may attend certain reading classes and not attend others of them.

371. Are you of opinion, that the best form in which religious instruction can be given in the present state of Ireland is, the reading of the Scriptures ?—I certainly am.

372. Are you of opinion that it would be advisable to introduce into the national schools a more detailed system of religious instruction in the way of comment upon the Holy Scriptures ?—I should consider it as a very great movement in advance for Ireland if you can establish Scripture schools, although you do not

establish any thing more detailed that would commit the different sectaries ; in Scotland we are exceedingly different in that respect. The dissenters in Scotland are chiefly Presbyterian, they dissent from the church on the score of patronage, and choose their ministers by popular election ; these form the great mass of our dissenters, so that our religious formularies, in fact, are subscribed to by them, and they have no objection to our national catechism, so that the difference between the sectaries and the church does not involve any embarrassment in regard to the use of the catechism of our national church.

373. Do you think that the sanction that is afforded to the principles of our religion by reading the Holy Scriptures is a matter that is indispensable to any system of education to which the public funds are in any shape appropriated ?—I think the public funds should be given to no system that does not incorporate with it Scriptural reading.

374. Do you limit that answer by your former observation, with respect to compulsory Scriptural reading ?—I think that Government, in the medium system which has been adopted for the education of Scotland, has made a proper advance which the population may or may not respond to. It is well that the population have universally responded to that advance in Scotland ; and, in like manner, I think that Government makes all the advance which is incumbent upon it, if it institute schools in Ireland where a Scriptural class forms an integral and indispensable part of the system ; but there should be no compulsion on the people to meet the Government but in the way themselves choose. At the same time I think that Christian philanthropists will and ought

to exert themselves as much as ever for the religious benefit of Ireland, if, in point of fact, the Scriptural education is not taken by the children of the Roman Catholics.

375. Supposing there were no scholars in the school that would attend the Scriptural class, how would you go on then?—My own confidence is, that there is such a decided superiority of argument on the side of Scriptural reading, that in a free state of things, where there is a full and unimpeded circulation of sentiment, it is impossible that any class of the population can stand out long against permissive or voluntary Scriptural reading, and upon the faith of that, I do hope that Government might with all safety proceed to the institution of schools all over the land upon the principle I have ventured to recommend.

376. Do you think you would have more Scriptural readers under a permissive system than under a compulsory system, and that those who did read under the permissive system would be more likely to read with profit and spiritual advantage?—From the very outset I reckon upon a much greater number of Scripture readers under the permissive system, and much greater results from it.

377. Do you consider that the interposition of authority to compel Scripture reading, as a matter of direct obligation, has not only the tendency you have described, of indisposing persons to that course of study, but also to lower and degrade the Scriptures themselves in the minds of men?—I certainly do think so; it leads to the establishment in the minds of the people of a most hurtful association with the Scriptures.

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