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About these clusters his interest; in depicting them he has lavished all the treasures of his vigorous genius, and splendidly decisive and incisive style. A strong masculine personality was Browning's, with a strong faith in the Unseen, a noble belief in his fellow-man—one who indeed

> Never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake.

The forces of the early part of the century which have served to guide the destinies of the age are all but exhausted; we await at length the advent of some fresh quickening impulse, of newer sources of intellectual and social activity. That we should now be conscious of a reaction is inevitable, for we are passing through a period of mediocrity. But nothing can take from us the heritage of past splendours. Other bards may come to charm us, to instruct us, and to give us stronger confidence in the unseen universe of spirit, while, nevertheless, not uncareful to open the eyes of our understanding to the endless beauties, which, in this visible part of God's creation, surround us on all sides. But Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning—these are, spiritually, with us still; their pages are ever unsealed for us, to learn therein the lesson that genius inspires, or to find the abundant solace that springs from the contemplation of noble thought and high imaginings. To flash a glory upon the sum of man's life, to strike a music from the story of his hopes and joys, his despair and tears—this is the unique privilege of genius.

E. H. Blakeney.

Art. VI.—THE ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

In introducing to you the subject of spiritual work in North and East London, it is right that I should first briefly explain to you why I venture to introduce it to your notice.

It is twenty-six years since I left the University of Oxford. In my undergraduate days I was greatly interested in the condition of the poor in London, and was constantly talking about the subject both to my friends and tutors. That was long before anybody had thought either of Toynbee Hall, or Oxford House, or School or College Missions. It was before Arnold Toynbee had entered at Balliol. It was therefore

peculiarly satisfactory to me to be appointed in 1880 (seven years after I took my degree) to a well-equipped parish in the slums of Westminster, with a population of between 6,000 and 7,000, all of them belonging to the labouring classes, where I was able to work practically at the problems which had attracted me in my college days. Still more interesting was it to me, after nine years at St. Stephen's, Westminster, to be appointed to my present duties by Bishop Temple, to be one of his official advisers and aides-de-camp, and that in reference to the vast Archdeaconry of London.

The Diocese of London now consists of the county of Middlesex. In the first half of this century it contained the counties of Essex and Hertford, and the northern parts of the counties of Kent and Surrey. It is not much more than twenty years ago that the Surrey portions were given up. Bishop Jackson used to confirm at Kingston, Richmond and Wimbledon. The present diocese is divided into two archdeaconries, that of London and that of Middlesex. The dividing-line is at Temple Bar, and the line runs north and south. The Archdeaconry of London contains the City, and the districts of Spitalfields, Shoreditch, Whitechapel, Bethnal Green, St. George's-in-the-East, Stepney, Bromley, Bow, Hackney, Hoxton, Haggerston, Islington, Holloway, Highbury, Clerkenwell, Bloomsbury—in all about 250 parishes, and upwards of 1,500,000 inhabitants.

There is something truly appalling in looking down from the Golden Gallery of St. Paul's Cathedral over the interminable billowy sea of houses which spreads itself in every direction beneath. What incalculable aggregates of poverty, misery, and sin does that vast dusky province of streets present! If you think that in that awful region which lies spread out, with its dumb, helpless appeal, beneath your feet there are more than 600,000 children attending elementary schools—more children, that is, than the whole population of Glasgow, or Birmingham, or Manchester—what problems does that alone suggest to the mind! And the heart feels more specially pitiful as it turns towards the grim and monotonous East; it is with something of an indignant pathos that the eye glances over the unbroken dreariness of the dwellings of more than a million toilers, of many races and many conditions, but leading a life which cannot be reckoned natural or healthy. Misery and poverty there are in the slums of Westminster and in North Kensington, and in St. Giles; but where else shall be found on so prodigious a scale such congested masses of ignorance, hopelessness, and irreligion? Not that the whole district is the same. I shall presently show of what different classes its population

consists, and how cruel and unwarrantable are the exaggerations which have been entertained as to its character; but where else shall we find an area at so dead a level, with a lowness of ideal so uninterrupted, with an outlook so inhumanly uninteresting? Where else can we speak of a population with habits so degraded as in that dismal tract, known as Spitalfields, between the soaring spires of Whitechapel and Shoreditch, where from the very nature of the case a long series of the most hideous murders had no chance of being discovered?

But it is not that the people in the East End of London are worse than anywhere else; it is merely that the lower levels of our social life are there congregated together in a manner beyond all precedent. Seventy years ago, when London was not much more than a tenth of what it is now, an acute and independent thinker—William Cobbett—used to lament what even then was its disproportionate overgrowth. He used to call it the Great Wen. "The dispersion of the Wen," he wrote, "is the only real difficulty that I see in settling the affairs of the nation and restoring it to a happy state. But dispersed it must be."[1] Since his day the evils which he deplored have become tenfold in magnitude; but the dream of dispersion is as far off as ever. London has grown to its present portentous and even horrible dimensions by the absolute license of the English system of civic government. Wherever any man wished to build, and could obtain a site, he has been allowed to build, provided he followed certain elementary directions for streets and construction. No presiding forethought, no genius of prevision, has been present to direct its increase and to lessen the evils of its preposterous size. Water and drainage are provided for the general good of the whole; but fresh air, open spaces, the admixture of classes, easy and rapid communication with centres of labour, considerations which would have mitigated the intolerably dreary conditions of life, have been from the beginning neglected. When, with the advance of the Funding System and the approach of railways, the population first began to increase with new and alarming rapidity, how easy it would have been to secure, for instance, a belt of free ground a quarter of a mile in breadth all round old London; but now it is all covered with houses, and it is too late. The illimitable, parasite, poverty-stricken population has come, and it only remains for us to see how we can best improve and brighten its hapless lot.

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[1] Cobbett's "Rural Rides," p. 42.

Mr. Charles Booth, the statistician, divides the population of East London into eight classes:

1. The lowest sort of occasional labourers; loafers; semi-criminals.
2. Those who make casual earnings, and can only be described as very poor.
3. Intermittent earnings.
4. Small regular earnings. 3 and 4 make together the poor, as distinct from the very poor.
5. Regular standard earnings; above the line of poverty.
6. Higher class labour.
7. Lower middle class.
8. Upper middle class.

The numbers of the lowest class he puts at 11,000, but confessedly on very rough data—that is, 1¼ per cent. of the population. We may be thankful that they are not more.

The second class—those who make casual earnings and are very poor—he reckons at 100,000, or 11¼ per cent. of the population.

The third class—those who make intermittent earnings—number nearly 75,000, or about 8 per cent. of the inhabitants. These, he says, are more than any others the victims of competition, and on them falls with peculiar severity the weight of recurrent depressions of trade.

Next come those who make small regular earnings, who come to about 129,000, or 14½ per cent. They include the better end of the casual dock and waterside labour, those having directly or indirectly a preference for employment. The section embraces also a number of labourers in the gas-works, whose employment falls short in summer, but never entirely ceases. The rest of the section are the men who are in regular work all the year round at a wage not exceeding 21s. a week. As a rule, these men have a hard struggle to make both ends meet; but they are, as a body, decent and steady, paying their way and bringing up their children respectably. The work they do demands little skill or intelligence.

The fifth class is composed of those who make regular standard earnings—artisans, the best kind of street-sellers and general dealers, a large proportion of the small shop-keepers, the best off amongst the home manufacturers, and some of the small employers. This is by far the largest division, adding up to 377,000, or over 42 per cent. This class, says Mr. Booth, is the recognised field of all forms of co-operation and combination, and I believe, and am glad to believe, that it holds its future in its own hands. No body of men deserves more consideration.

Next come those who form the higher class of labour, who are the best paid of the artisans, and amount to 121,000, or about 13½ per cent. They are a distinct and honourable section of the people, earning from 30s. to 45s. or 50s. a week —foremen, warehousemen, the non-commissioned officers of the industrial army. Their sons take their places as clerks and their daughters get employment in first-class shops and places of business.

The lower middle class number 34,000, or nearly 4 per cent. They are chiefly found in Hackney and the outskirts of the East. The upper middle class number 45,000, or 5 per cent., more than two thirds of whom belong to Hackney.

We cannot but regard a very large part of the population of East London as, in its present circumstances, superfluous. Those who do not earn more than supports themselves can be regarded as no gain to the community in which they live. Such must be a parasite population, living one upon another. There is no reason in the nature of things why London should be so large; it is only the attractive force of its enormous area and its inflated reputation as offering chances of employment which maintains its size and increases constantly its bulk. London in Middlesex increases every year in something like the ratio of 50,000, and though I am unable to say what proportion of this belongs to the East End, it must be something like half. This would not be the case if London was left to itself. It is strongly alleged, though there is no absolute proof of the statement, that Londoners in the third generation become degenerate, and would diminish rather than increase in numbers. London is fed from the country and from abroad. It is a very remarkable fact that out of every 1,000 inhabitants of East London and Hackney 280 are immigrants from the outside. Out of the whole 900,000, 252,000 were not born in London. Those born in foreign countries amount to 21,426, the population of a considerable town. The Jewish community, to a large extent born in London, are on good grounds reckoned at from 60,000 to 70,000. Every great work undertaken in London brings up fresh blood from the country. Besides these broad main facts, there is a constant kaleidoscopic shifting of population in all parts. Thus the difficulties of the problems with which we have to deal are ceaselessly on the increase.

The greatest physical evil with which we have to contend is from overcrowding. It lies at the base of almost every other disease, social and religious. So heavy is the pressure of competition for shelter that amongst the people of whom we are speaking there are very few who spend less than a fifth of their weekly income on rent. The number of families who

occupy each a single room has not been accurately estimated, but it is enormous. Not infrequently there are more families than one in the single-roomed tenement. Four shillings is the average rent of one room, six shillings of two. From such a state of things the imagination shrinks back appalled. There is no need to multiply horrors; they have been detailed with point and brilliancy by picturesque writers. The fact is enough. Under such conditions morality and even decency are impossible. The child of these surroundings has never known what is meant by purity.

We do not wonder that in this state of things no very large number of the population attends church, chapel, or mission-room. A census on a particular day is somewhat misleading, as it is not always the same people who attend public worship on successive Sundays. Still, a census is a rough guide. On October 24, 1886, the Church of England had upwards of 72,359 worshippers, distributed between morning and evening; other denominations, 81,699. These numbers added together give a total of a little over 154,000. No doubt for the Church of England the numbers are considerably underestimated, as no account is taken of those present at early Communions or at afternoon services. To this we must add the census of attendance at mission-halls, taken on November 27, 1887. Morning, afternoon, and evening, the Church of England had 5,142 present on that day in those adjuncts to the parish churches, and other denominations 43,543; the total being 48,585. It will give us a rough but not unfair conclusion if we add the mission-hall census to the church and chapel census; and thus we arrive at the result that 202,585 might be supposed to be in church, chapel, or mission-hall on some particular Sunday. The consequent reflection that, in spite of all deductions, there must be something like 700,000 persons who are not often seen inside a place of worship, must give us ground for deep and painful thought. We cannot be surprised that the language of the greater number of those whose condition we are considering is, probably through no fault of their own, redolent of the foulest coarseness and of ceaseless blasphemy. We cannot be surprised that amongst the greater number of the young people prostitution or concubinage is the rule. When, in addition to the unhealthy conditions in which from infancy they are steeped, the astounding state of our marriage laws makes matrimony legal for a boy at fourteen and for a girl at twelve, we cannot be surprised to find the majority of marriages reckless and unthrifty, and in a vast number of cases only contracted to cover the coming birth. We cannot be astonished that the one institution which flourishes in

East London is the public-house; that it exists everywhere in countless numbers; that men, women, and young people drink; that on drink is spent so huge a share of wages which might have gone for thrift and comfort; that side by side with the public-house flourishes the pawn-shop; and that directly there comes some depression of trade or want of employment, even those who before were in receipt of good wages, habitually and regularly exist on the pledge of their clothes and possessions. There may be good-nature and kindness amongst this great mass of our fellow-citizens; they may be on the whole wonderfully well disposed to obey the law; but their outlook is dark, their standard of life low; and too many of them can only be described in the words of St. Paul as "without hope and without God in the world."

When we come to consider in the next place the resources of the Church of England in the district we have under review, we cannot but be surprised to find their woful and lamentable insufficiency. This is not the occasion to speak of the truly magnificent efforts and achievements of Bishop Blomfield and Bishop Tait, followed up by Bishop Jackson, by the indefatigable and enlightened Prelate who is now our Bishop, and by their suffragans. These things can be read in the admirable manual of Prebendary Walsh. Without them our condition would be indeed hopeless. The foundations have been laid. There are in the Archdeaconry (not reckoning the City of London) 187 parishes, with an average population of between 6,000 and 7,000 each. But these parishes are of most unequal size. There is one with over 21,000 inhabitants; one over 20,000; one over 19,000; three over 18,000; one over 17,000; two over 15,000; six over 14,000; three over 13,000; five over 12,000; eight over 11,000; ten over 10,000; sixteen over 9,000; and thirteen over 8,000. It would be idle to pretend that these parishes are not deplorably deficient in church accommodation, and in ministerial supply.

After having given you the dark side of the picture, let me show you some brighter touches.

First of all there are the Suffragan Bishops, who have to be missionaries in the truest sense of the word. I was chaplain to Bishop Jackson when the first suffragan was appointed for East London. There were great debates as to the fittest man. I strongly urged two names: Boyd Carpenter and Barry, but Bishop Jackson thought they were both men of too great powers for a subordinate position. One has since become Bishop of Ripon, the other Primate of Australia. The choice of Walsham How was very happy, and amply justified. He was the founder of the East London Church

Fund, which the present Suffragan, Dr. Winnington Ingram, so well known in Oxford, has raised to £20,000 a year. Bishop How did much to stimulate the energies of the clergy, and to give them hope and courage in their difficult and trying work. I have known five suffragans in my Archdeaconry, and each has brought special gifts to the work: Bishop Billing, an abounding geniality, and wide pastoral experience; Bishop Browne, a power of organization and a personal authority surpassed by none; Bishop Winnington Ingram, a personal charm, a power of hopefulness, and a gift of sympathetic speech which are given to few; and Bishop Turner, the new Suffragan for Islington, a fund of good sense and a capacity for organization which have made him a valuable administrator and counsellor to three successive Bishops of London.

Another point is that although the Church-people who gather round the different churches must be numbered by hundreds instead of thousands, and though the surrounding masses of indifference seem almost overwhelming, and the churches themselves are not more than a glimmer here and there amongst the prevailing carelessness; still, where a man is a genuine friend of the people, and gives himself heart and soul to the work of turning them to God, the response is equally genuine and thorough. I should like to offer each of you the annual parish year-book, for instance, of such churches as St. George's-in-the-East, Bromley-by-Bow, St. Stephen's, Old Ford, Whitechapel, St. Mark's, Dalston, Stoke Newington, and many others. And it is a mistake for either party in the Church to claim any superiority in parish works. Wherever there is real affection individually for the people themselves, real self-devotion, real primitive Christian unworldliness, there the genius of Christianity shines out, the people feel it and recognise it, and solid Christian work is the result. Amongst the most extreme parishes in my Archdeaconry are St. Alban's, Holborn, St. Peter's, London Docks, and St. Augustine's, Hackney. Their influence amongst the very poor is splendid and exemplary. But it is not because of elaborateness of ritual, but because of the genuine Christian lives, the true Christian love, of the men who work those parishes.

The most promising feature of all is the way in which large bodies of working men are being led to consider their relation to God by what are known as Men's Services. Two parishes I will mention as instances—one St. Peter's, Holloway, the other St. James the Less, Bethnal Green. The services in both of these churches were inaugurated by one man, a very remarkable person, Mr. Watts-Ditchfield, formerly a young

Methodist minister. He was curate in Holloway, and is Vicar in Bethnal Green. He gave himself up for six months to make personal friends of all the working men he could meet. He gained their individual confidence and affection. Then he started the Men's Service. The church on Sunday afternoon was given up to working men. He got a committee, a secretary, an instrumental band. His addresses were pointed, epigrammatic, and earnest. Very soon he had a regular congregation of 500 or 600 men. Confirmation followed, and then Communion. Morning and evening services were replenished. Social work grew out of this great congregation. Personal advice was sought and given. The whole neighbourhood was improved. The women insisted on having a special service for themselves, and that was given them on Tuesday afternoons. After a few successful years the Bishop removed Mr. Watts-Ditchfield to a parish in Bethnal Green. The same results followed there as if by magic. Nothing of the kind had occurred in Bethnal Green before. The old Vicar came down to meet me on my first address there, and thought there was a riot, so many men were crowding into the church. What was better still, we found a young man to take up the work at Holloway. He had the same success as Mr. Ditchfield. At the annual festival, the other day, at the Town Hall of Holloway, when the Bishop of London addressed the men, hundreds were turned away. As long as we can get a succession of men like Watts-Ditchfield and Arthur Hart the institution may be considered permanent.

The Deaconesses' Institution now numbers 16 deaconesses, as well as 12 church-workers, and 8 associates, helping in 20 parishes. It has also 30 associates in different parts of the county, spreading sympathy for East London to the utmost of their power. We have also St. Margaret's House, the new home of the ladies' branch of Oxford House. That branch was formed in 1889, and formerly worked with the Cheltenham Ladies' College Guild. It has now a separate house for nine resident ladies. Then, again, we welcome the York House Ladies' Settlement for North London, an institution of a similar character, promoted by Mr. Hocking, Vicar of All Saints', Tufnell Park. The S.P.C.K. Training College has continued its admirable work. The institution has been already an incalculable blessing to young men with an evangelistic impulse amongst the lower middle classes, and to the Church at large. It is a sign of the great development of lay-work in our generation, and it is a wholesome acknowledgment of the need of careful training. It would be desirable if a number of bursaries could be attached to this college, as the young men are seldom able to keep themselves, and yet during their

training must abandon their secular employments. In this connection we note with satisfaction the increase in the number of diocesan readers who are allowed to preach in churches at extra services. We should notice also the Church Army headquarters and their work at St. Mary-at-Hill, the jubilee of the Scripture Readers' Association, and the continued work of the London City Mission.

It is hardly necessary for me to mention the popular and successful operations of Toynbee Hall and Oxford House. They have the signal merit of encouraging sympathy for the spiritual and temporal interests of the poor amongst highly-placed and highly-educated young men. The self-denying example of the members and associates has done much to increase the sense of Christian brotherhood amongst all classes. Their debates have helped an intelligent view of current events.

The work of Toynbee Hall and Oxford House is of course more directly educational and social. Religion is not mentioned in the clubs for men and boys, except in the Sunday Bible-class. Directly spiritual, on the other hand, are the aims and objects of the various colleges and school missions which act as the nucleus of a new parish. Of these there are five in the part of London of which I am speaking—Eton, at Hackney Wick; Christ Church, Oxford, at Stepney; Marlborough School Mission, at Shoreditch; Merchant Taylors' Mission, at Hackney; and Highgate School Mission, at Dalston. Of the important and increasing help we have received from the various public school and college missions it is hardly necessary that I should remind the present audience.

Amongst other grounds for satisfaction, I should mention the development of the Church Lads' Brigade and the Seaside Camp. Both deal in a most hopeful manner with a class of youths whom it is not easy otherwise to reach.

Let me give you some individual instances of growth. Take a parish in Islington. During the five years ending with 1892, as compared with the previous five years ending with 1887, it increased its baptisms from 133 to 687; its confirmations from 72 to 299, the majority of whom were grown-up persons; its Communions from 7,000 to 15,000, and its contributions to Home and Foreign Missions from £900 to £1,100.

Take another parish in Islington. In 1889 its Communions were 607; in 1893 they were 3,398; and in three years it had 298 confirmations, far more than half of the candidates being over twenty years of age.

Again, it is important that the country should be reminded of the obligation it owes to London by being relieved of its surplus population. The number of persons residing in London

who were not born there is 1,452,348. Every county in England sends its contribution of souls—Kent, 102,000; Essex, close on 100,000; Surrey, 65,000; Suffolk, 52,000; Sussex, 47,000; and so on in varying degrees. Scotland, too, is relieved of 53,390. On the other hand, London only contributes to England and Wales some 350,000. So the net addition to London from the provinces and elsewhere is 1,100,000. We draw the conclusion that every great centre in England and Wales should feel the duty of contributing something, at any rate, to the spiritual provision for these vast hordes whom they send up to the metropolis, and who, of course, multiply themselves in their new surroundings. We are glad, indeed, to have a hundred places in the provinces helping us, but that does not in any adequate degree express the debt of the country to us for taking the overflow of its inhabitants, for whom the provinces themselves would have otherwise to provide.

Once more, a large part of the increase of London exists for the sake of those many thousands of wealthy people who have beautiful homes and estates in the provinces, and who spend the spring and summer seasons in London for the sake of Parliament and Society. These eminent people consider their interests and sympathy are chiefly due to their country properties and neighbourhood. Yet, in reality, they owe more to London. London gives them the chief impulse in their lives, and it is in London that their most important functions are performed. It is from the vast merchandise of London that they obtain the chief adjuncts for their stately and beautiful homes, and for their constant and wide hospitality. We must try and make them recognise these facts. London is sadly deficient in public spirit and local patriotism. We sigh with admiration when we hear that one single donor has given the Bishop of Manchester £50,000 for purposes kindred to those which we are advocating.

And besides these considerations, whatever affects London affects England in every corner. Nearly one-sixth of the inhabitants of England and Wales are living in London. There is hardly a family in the country but has members, connections, or friends in London. London is more than the heart and brain: it is a large part of the body too. The tone and feeling of London is echoed in every county. The songs of London spread with astonishing rapidity to every village-platform and taproom. Scepticism prevalent in London would mean a general decay of faith. We long to see a thoroughly Christian London, strong in self-respect, self-restraint, temperance, thrift, virtue, unselfishness, and all good works. The light is already dawning; the recognition of the truth is growing. We rejoice of course at every Chris-

tian effort made, whether by ourselves or not—Wesleyan, Congregationalist, Baptist, we thank them for their work in the Lord; for we wish them God-speed for His gifts of grace and the Holy Spirit. But that does not relieve us from the imperative duty of earnestly striving together for the faith. All kinds of evidence show us that the harvest is ready. We only need more labourers, and for the labourers their own proper wages and support. The Holy Spirit is waiting to bless us. Shall our feebleness and backwardness check His Divine operations?

No! we have not reached the limits of our efforts or of our resources. We will go on in faith, believing that there are yet hundreds and thousands of hearts which the Lord is ready to open for the increase of His work and the extension of His kingdom. He is but waiting for the further manifestations of our own faith, zeal, and sincerity. We will claim His promise and beseech Him with our prayers, and He who never turned a deaf ear to the cry of the poor and the humble, will shower upon us a tenfold blessing.

What I should like to urge this afternoon would be that many more of you should seek orders in London for this inspiring work of evangelizing the greatest city in the world, and giving its multitudes the hope of the life that is in Christ. If you want a curacy write to me, and I will find you what you want; the superintendence of the Bishop of London's ordinations is one of my principal duties. We need all who can come. And as Oxford is constantly sending her sons to London, both the university and the town, and as I have shown you that every county in England is pouring its superfluous population into the vast bewilderment of the Metropolis, I would ask you all to think about the Bishop of London's Fund—that is, the London Spiritual Aid Fund—and see if Oxford cannot do something to raise it to its proper proportions. An increase of 40,000 souls every year in the diocese and an income that never grows of about £22,000 or £23,000 a year, and vast arrears of work to be overtaken! You all owe a duty to your capital city. Can you not become annual subscribers to the fund? Missionary clergy, additional curates, Scripture readers, mission women, mission halls and buildings, new churches, some sort of pittance for the new clergy—these are the things that are wanted in an ever-increasing ratio. Where they are provided, the blessing and encouragement are evident. God grant that you may all take an interest in a work that is really imperial; that you may inquire how we are progressing with it; that you may help us with your sympathy and your prayers!

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.