

tends to interfere with the perpetuity of such relations cannot be too strongly deprecated by good citizens of either country.

President Harrison regrets that in many of the controversies, "notably those as to the fisheries on the Atlantic, the sealing interests in the Pacific, and the canal tolls, our [their] negotiations with Great Britain have continuously been thwarted or retarded by unreasonable and unfriendly objections and protests from Canada." Have the objections and protests been "unreasonable and unfriendly"? That is the only question. Our right to make them, as the party whose interests are directly involved, it would be absurd to question. We dare say there would have been no sealing controversy with Great Britain but for Canada's objections and protests, but surely even President Harrison could hardly expect that Canada would submit uncomplainingly to a claim of jurisdiction on the part of the United States over a portion of the open sea, which would have had the effect, if allowed, of debarring large numbers of Canadian citizens from the pursuit of what they regard as an honest, as it undoubtedly is a lucrative, calling. But the question of Canadian unreasonableness in this matter may now be left to the decision of the arbitrators from whom President Harrison so confidently expects a favourable verdict.

We are not of the number of those who believe that Canada is utterly without fault in her relations to the United States. We have no doubt that there has been more or less of unreasonableness on both sides. We have often expressed disapprobation of the action of the Canadian Government in the matter of the canal tolls, and we have not been able to see the wisdom or statesmanship displayed in the refusal to permit the transport of the cargoes of American fishermen across our territory, though the latter prohibition comes strictly within our treaty rights and is, moreover, a policy quite in accordance with that which the President would like to see applied to Canadian railways in the United States. But what astonishes us is that one in such a position as that occupied by Mr. Harrison, and with his access to sources of accurate information, should commit himself to public utterances so obviously narrow, one-sided and unstatesmanlike. The surprise of impartial observers will be in serious danger of being changed into a feeling still more uncomplimentary when it is understood that, as the Washington correspondent of the Toronto Globe has made quite clear, the President's statistics in regard to the trade done by Canadian railroads are absurdly wide of the mark, that his statements in regard to the immunity claimed by these roads from the jurisdiction of the Inter-State Commerce Commission are altogether out of harmony with the facts of the case, and that, as Mr. Foster, our Minister of Finance, has further shown, his account of the cause of the breaking off of the attempted trade negotiations and his figures touching Canadian railway and steamship companies are also glaringly incorrect. Some allowance should be made for the ill-natured utterances of a disappointed and angry man, but hardly for grossly erroneous facts (!) and figures in a State document.

Whoever is satisfied with what he does, has reached his culminating point—he will progress no more. Man's destiny is not to be dissatisfied, but forever unsatisfied.—F. W. Robertson.

## CHARITY IN ITS RELATION TO SOCIAL REFORM.\*

Pauperism is a disease of the body politic, (or as the physicists prefer to call it, the social organism) of which charity is the medicine. Utopia thinks that there ought to be no need for any medicine—that the social organism would be perfect if only something or somebody could be got out of the way. Would that Utopia were reality! To perfection the universe, including the social organism, may be, and we hope is, working, but at present imperfection is the rule; it is the rule, so far as we can see, of the solar system and the sidereal system as well as of everything on earth. When we have made the bodily frame of man perfect, put an end among the animals to the cruel struggle for existence, ordered the weather so that the harvest shall never be spoiled, regulated all that is irregular in the relations of the planets, given the moon back her atmosphere, and stayed those agencies of destruction which astronomy sees at work in the remotest stars, we may hope to see the social organism free from imperfection. As it is, we must be content with gradual improvement: violence may lacerate and convulse the social organism, but as dire experience shows it cannot transform. We want, say the champions of labour, not charity but justice. Would that they could have perfect justice, but this, like all other perfection, being at present beyond our reach, charity must still do what it can.

Not that our ideas about pauperism have not changed. The Middle Ages thought it a spiritual blessing, and they deemed indiscriminate almsgiving a ladder to heaven. We see in pauperism and charity only questions of social sanitation. I knew an English clergyman, a very kind-hearted man and very active in his calling, who used to say that at the day of judgment he would be able to plead that he had never given a penny to a beggar.

Whenever anything systematic in the way of charity organization, or any use of public authority for the purpose, is proposed, people are apt to cry out that they do not want an English Poor Law. It is quite true that we do not want an English Poor Law. The English Poor Law had its origin in an era of industrial dissolution and vagabondage to which there has been no parallel in our history, and it is adjusted primarily to the needs of a body of farm labourers whose wages do not permit them to save. Let us, then, first lay the idea aside and not allow it to prejudice us against any systematic action, any use of public authority, or any appointment of regular officers for which our own circumstances may call.

The distress with which we have to deal is of two kinds: that which arises from misfortune and that which arises from fault, the latter being semi-criminal in its character and often leading to crime. Of sheer misfortune there is plenty in the world, as those who are inclined to a Draconic treatment of these questions should bear in mind. Distress may be produced by disease, decrepitude, loss of limbs, loss of the bread-winner in a family, the fluctuations of the labour market, by which labourers are thrown out of employment, and many other accidents of life. This is the proper sphere of private benevolence which has produced our charitable institutions to the benefit, not only of those who receive, but of those who give, especially if they not only give but work. With private benevolence goes the personal sympathy for which, as well as for material aid, unmerited distress may look. Private benevolence has only to take care that it does not undermine that loyalty to labour on which character and happiness depend. It is not difficult to tempt any of us to live in idleness rather than by work. Mutual understanding and comparison of notes among those engaged in the work of charity are necessary to prevent overlapping, waste, and the growth of a set of mendicants who make a wretched livelihood by going round from one charity to another. This caution is

especially applicable to the churches, which are otherwise liable to be taken in by impostors who go about professing one religion after another, that they may dip their hands in all the almsplashes. There are some, experienced in these matters, who regard the action of churches as organs of charity altogether with misgiving, and would prefer to see religious profession kept entirely apart from claims for pecuniary help. A Canadian or American congregation can have no such economical functions to discharge as those of a primitive Christian brotherhood in the midst of a society alien to it, or those of an English parish which is an administrative as well as an ecclesiastical division. That the liability is real appears from the experience of the Masonic Association, which simply by a more careful scrutiny of cases has reduced the expenditure of its Board of Relief in Toronto from \$1,000 to between \$200 and \$300 a year, and on the whole field of operations has cut down its expenditure by \$50,000 dollars. Since 1884 it has scheduled 1,204 cases of fraud.

Benevolence must also be careful to look to remote as well as to immediate consequences. An enquiry which I once had to conduct into charitable foundations in England showed how often the munificence of founders had defeated its own ends. Doles caused rents to rise in the favoured locality, almshouses bred improvidence, even educational charities produced, with the hope of a nomination, neglect of educational duty at home. We may think we do a kindness to labour in fixing a minimum of wages, and that idea has not been confined to our own city. But what are the consequences? First that the man whose labour is not worth the minimum is discarded and thrown out of work altogether; secondly, that the promise of exceptionally good times brings a rush of labour to the local market, which is then overcrowded. So, you take a child from a bad home, transfer it to a good institution, feed, clothe and educate it far better than it could be fed, clothed or educated in its home and start it on a higher plane of life. So far as that individual child is concerned, and so far as the interest of the community in that individual child is concerned, you may feel sure that you have done good. But take care that you do not hold out a premium to parental neglect. Take care, if in your charitable or reformatory effort you are led to interfere with the family, that you see your way clearly and know well what you are doing. There are some who would almost supersede the family and its duties by the action of the State. In "Looking Backward" it is proposed that children should be maintained not by the parent, but by the State, because, says the writer, it is manifestly wrong that one human being should be dependent for existence on another; as if the Government, for which the State is only a mystic name, did not consist of human beings! We are touching here upon a class of questions with regard to which a Liberal of the old school, which loved and trusted liberty, may be behind his age. But make up your mind which is to be your main spring, the State or the family, and let it do its work. Whichever your choice you will not escape imperfection. There are many bad homes, but there are bad Governments too. For my part, so long as the family remains in any degree the seat of affection, however coarse and rough, I shall be inclined to prefer it as the training place of children to the State machine or the institution in which, however good of its kind, affection has no place.

The other kind of distress with which we have to deal is that which is more or less the consequence of faults and semi-criminal in character. Then public authority must come in. Public authority alone can penalize repression, vagrancy and mendicancy, call to account those who desert their wives and families, or dispose of any case in which compulsion is required. It is doubtful whether without public authority the labour test can be rigorously applied to the tramp. Experienced judges would prefer that the casual ward should be under the jurisdiction of the police. We have now a very good casual ward in connection with the House of Industry, but it is difficult for any private institution to prevent its casual ward from being sometimes used as a lodging

\* Paper read before the Conference on Social Problems, at Toronto, 10th December, 1892, by Professor Goldwin Smith.