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POVERTY!

What Causes It? And What Will Cure It?

A Sermon Preached by the Rev. Douglas Hemmison, in Gover Street Methodist Church, Sunday, April 16, 1916.

Text: Prov. 30: 8, 9. — "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me; lest I be full and deny thee and say, who is Jehovah? or lest I be poor and steal."

It has recently been stated in the press of this city that the church is not sufficiently concerned in the economic welfare of the masses. That statement is true. The church should be more than an asylum for saved souls. It should be a union of all who love to help all who suffer.

The duty of the church should be more than securing passports for heaven for the people. It should include the securing of life, labour, and happiness for them as they journey thither.

The problem of poverty in this city is not receiving the amount of attention which it deserves.

Professor Winslow says "that forty per cent. of the annual death rate is preventable." The City of New York reduced its infant mortality from 144 per thousand in 1907 to 94 per thousand in 1914. In our own city the rate stood in 1914 where it stood in 1907—168. On the 21st of last November the daily press of this city stated that there were 43 cases of diphtheria in our midst. On that day St. John, N.B., had 2 cases and Halifax, N.S., had 4. If honour binds us to kill people who attack our national institutions, honour equally binds us to protect our citizens from microbes and preventable degeneracy.

The present social order is far from being an expression of Christian brotherhood. There are men, women and children in our midst who are suffering from unjust economic conditions.

There was never a time when the duty of the Church to proclaim the practical demands of human brotherhood was so imperative as now.

I shall first define my terms. I shall then set forth certain fundamentals which must be accepted by all as a common basis of discussion. Thereafter I shall state what I have calculated to be a living wage and divide those whose earnings fall below such a living wage into groups.

I shall next discuss some of the causes of poverty and shall conclude by suggesting some means for improving the conditions which produce poverty.

What is Poverty? Poverty is that condition in which a normal demand for food is not satisfied. It is of three kinds. Poverty of the Purse, Poverty of the Mind, and Poverty of the Life. Poverty of the Purse always produces poverty of the mind and life.

A poorly nourished body is a ready

prey for disease of all kinds because it has so little resisting power. A poorly nourished body is also a ready prey to feeble-mindedness. A weak mind means a weak will. God cannot do much with a weak will. The devil can. Nature abhors a vacuum. She hates an empty stomach. The devil loves one because he knows that an empty stomach means an empty mind and an empty life. You can't raise men and women on bread and tea. Poverty produces starvation, inefficiency, disease and crime.

Riches may be defined as that condition in which the normal demand for food is oversatisfied. Overfeeding is gluttony and like underfeeding produces poverty of mind and life. Crime and vice find their habitation in the lives of the rich and the poor.

The writer of the text was a shrewd observer of human life.

This being true, the following fundamentals are clear.

1. There is a standard of income below which human life exists in a condition of starvation and therefore becomes a menace to society.

2. There is a standard of income below which starvation which therefore becomes a menace to society. Therefore it is the duty of all fair minded citizens to study the conditions and try to improve them.

Let us now estimate the amount of income which in this community constitutes a living wage. A living wage is that amount of income which is necessary to satisfy the normal demand for food, in body, brain and life. The average family in this town numbers five.

Rent per family (three to four rooms)	\$ 4.00
Fuel and Oil	6.00
Clothing	4.00
Doctor's bills, medicines, etc.	1.00
Insurance, school fees, reading material, church, amusements	2.00
Food which at the lowest estimate would cost 15 cents per individual per day, i.e., 5 cents per meal	22.50
	\$39.50

This equals about \$9.00 per week, every week in the year.

If this estimate is fair, then all families receiving less than nine dollars per week are insufficiently paid. I do not know how many such families there are but the number must be large. This Church helps no families which are receiving more than \$30.00 per month. I presume no church or charitable organization does.

State Charity gave assistance last year to 750 families in the city including electoral districts, exclusive of Poor House, Hospital, Insane Asylum, and Old Age Pensions.

This means that individuals were

helped to the number of	3,700
The Churches and Charitable Institutions helped (estimated)	12,300
	6,000
Less allowance for overlapping	1,000
	5,000

It would appear that we have about five thousand persons who have to be aided by charity each year.

The number of those who do not receive a living wage must be far larger than this. I have no present means of estimating them.

They may, however, be divided into groups.

Group I.—There is a considerable class of men who earn about \$8.00 per week throughout the year. These, when their children are old enough to earn from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per week in factories and other places, manage to live in a fairly comfortable condition, though their mental and esthetic natures are often starved and their education is neglected.

Group II.—Another class of men, consisting of drivers, sailors, laborers, and others, I find, on enquiry, earn an average wage per month of \$29.46. The expenses of such a family scale very low and amount to about the following:

For coal (one small stove and fire often out) and oil per month	\$ 5.00
Rent	3.50
Clothing	3.00
Doctors bills and medicine	1.00
Insurance, reading, education	
	\$12.50

This leaves when not supplemented by children's earnings (as is often the case where the children are young) just eleven cents a day to feed each member of the family.

Such families are living constantly on a precipice of distressing and apprehensive need.

Group III.—Another group includes shop assistants who are receiving \$1.50 per week, errand boys who receive \$1.50 per week and sewers at home who receive \$2.50 cents per dozen for making overalls and jackets.

The members of this group live at home, otherwise they could not live at all.

Let us now consider the causes of Poverty. The causes of Poverty are of two sorts.

I. Causes for which the poor are themselves responsible.

II. Causes for which the community is responsible.

(a) Among the first sort I number (a) Extravagance and its allied fault Improvidence. Many spend their money as soon as it is obtained. They throw away money on cheap adornments and unnecessary food, buy prepared foods, and frequent places of amusement.

(b) Incompetence. This is notorious. Inability to cook, to buy, to utilize means to end, to sew and generally to keep house.

(c) Indolence. They don't like work. Young men and women will stay away from the factory and shop without warning, to chase a street parade, to have a walk, to go on a picnic. Men will stand around street corners and refuse to work for less than they worked for yesterday, at a more lucrative job.

(d) Drunkenness. None of us is satisfied with industrial conditions as they are to-day and this is a good sign.

The hearts of the employer and the employee are turning toward each other. The friend is taking the place of the enemy. And this suggests the first method of improving conditions and healing the sore in our social life.

(a) Co-operation.—Co-operation is gradually and surely supplanting competition. In many industrial plants it has completely taken its place. The Ford Motor Company has allotted ten million dollars on a profit sharing basis among its employees.

(b) Free and Compulsory Education.—This would at one sweep gather thousands of young people who in a few years will be the workers of the land into schools, and transform them into efficient helpers instead of "helpless incompetents."

(c) A Government Commission to study industrial and domestic conditions among the laboring classes. It is indubitably true that a normal person's whole working time is worth a living wage. This being true the inevitable and unwelcome conclusion follows that there are classes of laboring men who are not receiving a living wage.

The continuance of such conditions is disaster to the State.

It is a fact that the low wages paid in many instances is the result of complex industrial conditions over which the individual employer has little if any control, and that he would gladly welcome any sane and practical aid offered by such a commission toward securing a general agreement among employers which would increase wages even though dividends suffered.

(d) Sympathetic Study by all who are interested.—How little we have really done but talk and listen and give a dole and run away. It is not

Throw Away Your Eye-Glasses!

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Do you wear glasses? Are you a victim of eye-strain or other eye-weaknesses? If so, you will be glad to know that there is real hope for you. Many whose eyes were failing, say they have had their eyes restored through the principle of this wonderful free prescription. One man says, after trying it: "I was almost blind; could not see to read at all. Now I can read everything without any glasses and my eyes do not water any more. At night they would burn dreadfully; now they feel fine all the time. It was like a miracle to me." A lady who used it says: "The atmosphere seemed hazy with or without glasses, but after using this prescription for fifteen days everything seemed clear. I can even read fine print without glasses." It is believed that thousands who wear glasses can now discard them in a reasonable time and multitudes more will be able to strengthen their eyes so as to be spared the trouble and expense of ever getting glasses. Eye troubles of many descriptions may be wonderfully benefited by following the simple rules here in the prescription: Go to any active drug store and get a bottle of Bon-Opto tablets. Drop one Bon-Opto tablet in 4 glasses of water and allow to dissolve. With this liquid, bathe the eyes two to four times daily. You should notice your eyes clear up perceptibly right from the start and inflammation will quickly disappear. If your eyes are bothering you, even a little, take steps to save them now before it is too late. Many hopelessly blind might have been saved if they had cared for them in time. The Valmas Drug Co., of Toronto, will fill the above prescription by mail if you drugist cannot.

A prominent City Physician to whom the above article was submitted, said: "Bon-Opto is a very remarkable remedy. Its constituent ingredients are well known to eminent eye specialists as 'specially prescribed' by them. It can be obtained from any good druggist and is one of the very few preparations. I feel should be kept on hand for regular use in almost every family."

thus that we shall bring the desired result. It is by hard thought and patient endeavour in the spirit of the Great Worker, with the radiant vision of a great Human Brotherhood to lure us on.

Long ago a Hebrew youth, serving the narrow greed of men about him dreamed of a time when he would stand among a suffering people and give them bread. Years pass, and lo! a nation is saved from starvation by his philanthropy and wisdom. In the same land another youth, bearing in his heart the pain of his people's servitude, dreamed of their flight to freedom. And lo! the wilderness trembles with the tread of those slaves of labour marching on to freedom. In the little town of Nazareth another youth, toiling with the tools of carpentry, dreams of the Kingdom of Heaven. And lo! twelve men rise up and carry His word of Freedom and Justice to all the world. Pledged by their prayers and labors, the leaden sky breaks above the bowed and weary head and reveals the coming commonwealth of God. Paul dreamed. And lo! in Corinth and in Rome, in Spain and in the faraway land of our fathers the slave shakes off his shackles and looks unafraid into the eyes of Kings. John Wesley dreamed! And here, in this dear land, the church bells call in hamlet and in town to glowing hearts and lives revived.

So shall we dream. And lo! our children's hands shall ring God's iron on the anvil, shall swing God's wood across the runways, shall steer the argosies of God into the friendly horizon, shall show God's goods upon the shelves, shall write God's numbers in the ledger, shall turn His kindly sod in the field, shall speak His word in the Council Chamber. Let us be dreamers. And lo! shall come a time when every challenge set to thirsty lips shall hold the very life of God and every crumb of bread shall be a sacrament.

Cure Borders on the Miraculous.

A. SAWYER TELLS OF WONDERFUL WORK OF DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS.

He and His Wife, After Years of Doctoring, Found Quick Relief and Permanent Cure in Dodd's Kidney Pills. Capital Junction, Ont., April 28th. (Special.)—Bordering on the miraculous is the cure of Mr. A. Sawyer, of this place. For ten years, he was an invalid. Five doctors failed to help him. When he was a complete wreck, and unable to walk across his room he decided to try Dodd's Kidney Pills. Six boxes of them made him like a new man.

"Yes, I suffered for ten years," Mr. Sawyer said in speaking of his cure. "The doctors of whom I tried, five altogether, couldn't give me any permanent relief. Some said I had rheumatism, others called it lumbago, but I got steadily worse."

"I must say I was a complete wreck when I started to take Dodd's Kidney Pills. They made a new man of me."

"My wife got the same good results from them. It was after trying several doctors and a specialist from Saint Ste. Marie, who advised her to stay in bed a month, that she decided to try Dodd's Kidney Pills. She took a dozen boxes in all with splendid results. We both praise Dodd's Kidney Pills. No one can speak too highly of them."

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