

and that those who are so generally owe it to their own improvidence or worse. Moreover, there are a great many charitable institutions, some belong to the churches, some established by private benevolence, others set up by charitable societies. Further, a good many of these institutions are subsidized from the public funds. It is possible that we have not enumerated all the sources from which the needs of the poor are met; but these will do as specimens.

We do not, for a moment, wish to undervalue the kind or extent of the provision which is actually made. It is most desirable that alms houses, orphanages, and other such institutions, whether for the aged or for children who are deprived of one or both of their parents, should be increased in number. But this is not enough. There ought to be in every district a poorhouse into which destitute persons should have a right to claim admission, in which they should be provided with bare necessities in the shape of food and clothing, while they should be required to do such kinds of work as their strength and training may enable them to perform.

We are aware that this subject is now engaging the attention of our public men, and our remarks are certainly not made with any thought of hampering their actions, but rather with a view of drawing attention to the importance of their undertaking.

A very curious objection to a legal provision for the poor urges the danger of encouraging mendicancy. We suppose this is not at all an unnatural supposition to occur to persons who have small practical acquaintance with the subject. If the legal provision which we suggest included a large scheme of outdoor relief (like the old poor law of England) then we should admit the validity of the objections. When, however, we take the working of the actual poor law in England, and see how it requires nearly all applicants (except in cases of temporary sickness or when aged people get some help from old masters or other neighbours) to give up their own houses and remove to the workhouse, it is a very different matter. Nor is this all. It is not merely that the pauper is required to abandon his home, but his new abode is what its name implies—a workhouse; and the able-bodied beggar who refuses to do his appointed portion of work is liable to a taste of the treadmill by way of medicine. So much for the fear of increasing mendicancy.

We have, however, the test of experience. We know not precisely what the state of matters at the present moment may be in France; but a few years ago there was no regular public provision for the destitute. There were numbers of institutions, some of them under public authority, most of them under the care of the Church, but there was no house to which a poor man might go, in any district, and claim a lodging and a meal. The consequence of such a state of things was an amount of mendicancy which would be unintelligible and incredible to those who had not seen the beggars swarming in every town and village and highway throughout the land. It is quite true that we are, for many reasons, in no danger of having such a state of things in this country for many a year to come. But the danger gets nearer and nearer. When wealth increases, poverty also increases. The millionaire and the pauper grow side by side. New York city differs but little in this respect from London or Paris; and the laws of political economy cannot be violated with impunity.

We have said that the matter of pauperism is being now seriously considered; but there is another need which we have heard of no serious effort to supply—we refer to the need of medical attendance in the outlying districts of the country. We are not going to plead for the parish doctor as a universal institution, although perhaps we might do worse. We have our public schools to care for the minds of our poorer children. Why not our public doctors to care for the bodies of old and young? There are, even in this country, people with large families, and these not specially unthrifty or idle, who find great difficulty in paying the doctor's fee, and who sometimes sacrifice life or health by postponing the needed invocation of medical aid. We speak with horror of the state of things in England, where, until the year 1870, there was no public provision for primary education; but at least there was medical attendance for all the poor throughout the land, and that within a moderate distance.

But it is not for any universal provision of medical attendants that we are now pleading. It is rather for the subsidizing of physicians and surgeons in the less thickly peopled parts of this province. It is probably known to very few among us that, even in a region so well known as Muskoka, there are multitudes of people living, all the year round, at a distance of twenty or thirty miles from a medical man. Let us who live in towns think of such a case. And the grievance or the difficulty is no imaginary one. We have taken some pains to make inquiry, and we can assure those who are willing to do the same, that they will become acquainted with many very distressing occurrences which have resulted from the impossibility of obtaining timely medical aid.

We are not prepared to show the manner in which this need should be met—whether by the Dominion, by the Province, or by the district—or, in different proportions, by all the three. We are not prepared to say that the need can be adequately met in all places, even in this Province. But certainly it might be met in many districts and at no great expense. A small salary secured by a public grant would often enable a young medical man to settle in a district from which alone he could not obtain adequate support. And this would be a boon of unspeakable importance to the inhabitants of such districts.

It is impossible to work out, in greater detail, a scheme which should, in the best way practical, meet these needs which we have indicated. But we are quite sure that these matters demand attention; and we earnestly recommend some of our active-minded politicians, who have been promoting of late a good deal of fussy and useless legislation, to leave off fussing and see whether they cannot devise something which shall meet the needs and confer actual benefits upon the country.

JACQUES.*

In Paris, at the dawn of light,
To work two masons hied;
And, mounting to a scaffold's height,
Their labour briskly plied.

Soon, their frail foothold in the air
Cracked, threatening to give way—
Too weak the weight of two to bear,
For one, a trembling stay.

"Jacques!" cried his mate, "I have a wife,
And children three, alive."
"Farewell!" said Jacques and gave his life
A sacrifice for five.

O hero, known as "Jacques" to fame,
That deed's unselfish love
In full, we trust, shall cause thy name
To be inscribed—above!

Montreal.

GEO. MURRAY.

PARIS LETTER.

DURING the last fortnight we have had an unusual amount of public excitement, and though the daily telegrams will have told the story of the Boulanger-Floquet duel, your readers may care for more intimate details than can well be wired across the Atlantic. Boulanger seems to have gone to the Chamber in a mood absolutely reckless of consequences, quite prepared to give in his resignation as *député* and determined to speak his mind. He gave the lie four times to Floquet, and abused the present Government in his usual uncompromising fashion. That it is not particularly honourable or praiseworthy is incontestable, but it is difficult to see how Boulanger could substitute anything better. The vital forces of the country are sapped, and the group of men, say twenty, fifty, or a hundred in number, out of whom ministers must practically be chosen have lacked that larger education which is required from European statesmen. The stupidest boy at Eton or Harrow must have acquired a certain notion of how things go on at Vienna or St. Petersburg, while the child who leaves a French *Lycée*, however well taught, does not know the ways of the Governmental Ring. Even admitting, for the sake of argument, that the ways of the modern democracy are better ways, it is none the less certain that they will not fit on to the old traditions which govern every court in Europe, and if Boulanger wished to replace the actual Chamber and the actual Cabinet by men more fitted to sustain the prestige of France, he should have sought elsewhere for his materials. A sterile cry of *Vive la République* does nothing to bring about a better or even a different Government.

As to the incidents of the duel, it is evident that the fear of mishap cannot have crossed his mind; Floquet was a civilian and a man of sixty, and Boulanger, who was due in the evening at a large banquet, rushed on his adversary with an evident intention of disabling him quickly, and, by some extraordinary inadvertence, fell on the uplifted point of Floquet's sword. The surgeon who drew out the weapon said that had it been desired to make an incision upon the throat of a corpse which should pass between the artery and vein without penetrating either, success could hardly have been guaranteed. Very grave fears for the general's life were for some days entertained, though it was decided to issue re-assuring bulletins. He is certainly a man of indisputable energy and pluck. I was told that though assured by each and all of the four doctors summoned to his bedside that even to move would endanger him, he still determined to attend the banquet that same evening, as it was specially given in his honour. His dress clothes were sent for, and he attempted to rise, and fortunately fainted in the effort, and so had to submit *quand-même*. I was told this characteristic trait by one of his closest friends, with whom, by the bye, he fought his first duel four and twenty years ago, when a *capitaine*. On that occasion he was equally unlucky, being disabled for four months by a sword thrust through the ribs. He is now quite undauntedly putting up his name as candidate for the Ardèche. The result will be known to your readers by telegram long before this letter can reach you, and will be a test as to whether he has lost popularity by the result of the duel.

THE National Fête of the 14th of July passed off with exceptional brilliancy. Four thousand provincial mayors were invited by the President of the Republic to a great banquet on the Champs de Mars on the previous evening, and the *Revue* of Longchamps boasted of several fresh features, the most noteworthy being the first appearance on the annual field of the Polytechnic School, the great training school from which are drawn the military and civil engineers. President Carnot is an old *Polytechnicien*, and it was owing to his request that the school took part in the *défilé*, where the martial air of the students and their admirable discipline were much admired.

A well-known French artist, Monsieur Etex, died since I last wrote to you; and a touching mark of sorrow was seen yesterday at the public Gallery of the Luxembourg, which contains two of his works—a picture with "Eurydice" for subject and a marble statue of Saint Benôit lying on

* These few simple lines record an actual incident. The self-slain victim was known only by the name of "Jacques."