

SYSTEMATIC CHARITY.

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Every large city in the world has a destitute population ranging probably about five per cent. of the whole number of its inhabitants. There are the poor who are unable to work, the poor who are unwilling to work, and the poor without work for them to do.

The first of these classes include the sick, the aged, the deformed, and those who, whatever their disposition may be, are unfit to support themselves. They form the great mass of any city's permanent poor, and they are the ones towards whom the energies of the charitable and the actions of the Legislature are directed.

The second—and an alarmingly increasing class—furnish the pauper and the tramp of modern civilization, and it is said on the authority of a very experienced writer that “the pauper, the imposter, and the fraud of every description carry off at least one-half of all charity, public and private, and hence there is a constant and deplorable waste in the alms-funds of every large city.”

The third class of poor, able and willing to work, but without work to do, is a fluctuating class, absent in one city and present in another, and varying also in seasons in the same city. They form the lower order of working classes; if work is provided for them they may arrive at a higher level, if not they become depauperized and are the scandal of society.

I have divided the poor whom the taxpayer and the charitable have to support into three classes, with reference to their capacity or inclination for work—for labor of some kind; but there are others with whom the public are concerned, such as the criminal of minor offences, who is kept in gaol or in prison at the public expense; the drunkard, who finds his way to the same institutions, and a large miscellaneous class who, by reason of vice that is a legal crime, or vice that may not be such, are maintained in the hospitals and infirmaries and magdalen asylums, and whose children are to be found in the various institutions from the infants' and children's