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Help for the Helpless.

LONDON'S BITTER CRY
HUSHED IN CANADA.

BY

LADY HOBART,

HON. SEC. TO EMISE LONDON-FAMILY EMIGRATION FUND.

PRINTED BY REQUEST.

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LONDON
JOHN F. SHAW AND CO.

48, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1884.

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THE SUBSTANCE OF THE FOLLOWING PAPER
WAS GIVEN AT THE WORKERS' MEETING, DECEMBER, 1883,
At the Home of Industry,
COMMERCIAL STREET,
SPITALFIELDS.

LONDON'S BITTER CRY HUSHED IN CANADA.

I DO not think that I ever felt more thankful to God for help sent to the poor than I have felt since I have been in Canada and have there seen the effects of Emigration. The emigration work of which I wish particularly to speak is "The East London Family Emigration Society." Of course there are those in all parts of the land who need our help, and as far as we can we gladly let our organization help any of good character to emigrate, but *our fund is exclusively* for the benefit of *East London* poor, and our work is amongst the East Londoners.

This work commenced in 1868. Many of us remember that terrible time of suffering in the East of London; that terrible time of cholera, and famine, and fever, when the poor suffered so dreadfully. During all that sad winter of 1867 the East London Mission and Relief Society gave good help by sewing classes, &c., so far as it was enabled to do; but when the next summer was nearly over, and the similar hardships of another winter had to be faced, Lady Mary Feilding and myself felt that something practical and permanent should be done, or else there would be the same terrible misery in the winter that was coming. It seemed very desirable that some families should, if possible, be removed from the want and keen pressure of East London, and so we thought, "Why should they not emigrate?" Already it was late in the year

for emigration, and if any were to go they must leave in three weeks. The thing seemed impossible; but we called on Him in whose hands are the silver and gold, and He heard us. Within three weeks over £500—more than sufficient for the families we then had in view—was raised, and the first band of eighty-four emigrants set sail in August, 1868. We had at that time most valuable aid and advice from Sir John Rose (who was then the Minister for Finance in Canada), and he has ever since continued to give us much good counsel and kind encouragement. During the following winter we heard from these people who went out—how well they succeeded, although they went so late in the season, and how kindly they were received; and as we had these wonderfully satisfactory letters, and saw that even in the cold of the Canadian winter the people were so much better than if they had remained in East London, we felt much encouraged, and thought that what had proved good for them would prove good for others also. When, therefore, the spring came round again we renewed our efforts; and Lady Ripon took up the matter most warmly, as she has continued to do ever since. We were very successful, and in the spring of 1869 we sent out over a thousand people to Canada; and again in the succeeding year, 1870, we sent out over another thousand; and we have sent out *some* emigrants *every* year from that time. Altogether we have now sent out 3430 souls. And all through I would say we have been but instruments in the hand of God; for our belief is, that “the help that is done upon earth God doeth it Himself.” He knows we could never have done anything without Him, and the working of His hand has been very evident from the first. Again and again when a party has been on the very eve of going out, and when we have felt we could not possibly send another family, one would come forward, some family in every way eligible—just the very class of people we wanted to send. Perhaps a few days or hours before the party sailed

some most pressing case would be found, and what could we do? We just laid the matter before God in prayer, and we asked Him, if it were His will that this family should go, to send the money. And right through we can say, "*He has never failed us, and we have never had to keep back one single soul from want of funds.*"

Now this last year I have felt afresh the very great blessing of the work; for God has allowed me to see the results of emigration. I went to America to visit my son, and I was glad to be able to spend a few weeks in Canada, and I cannot possibly describe to you the joy of my heart as I saw the wonderful difference between the state of these people as I found them over there, and the condition that I had known them in when they were here. I had a book in which I had entered the names and particulars of all our emigrants, and the addresses of all who had written to us—as many of them did—after they settled in Canada. It is very easy to find any person in Canada. You have simply to get a directory of the town, and in that directory you will find the name of every person in the town, whether he be a labourer, a stonemason, or whatever he may be. So I found it easy to discover those who had not removed away; some, of course, had removed to other places, but a great many had remained where they first went. I visited a large number of these in different towns, and I wish to say that no agent went before me to prepare the people for my coming, or selected who I should see; therefore these were not "got up" cases. I went unexpectedly to the people's doors, and found out all that I could about our old friends and their present circumstances. In my book I had written the names and ages of each child, their occupation, &c., when in London. I used to refer to this, and go over the whole family, see where they were, how they were getting on, what the children were now doing. Of every one whom I went to see I asked this question, "Are you glad or are you sorry

that you came out to Canada?" And without any single exception, and without hesitation, the answer *always* was, "*We are glad we came out.*" -

I was able to find one man who went out with our very first party, fifteen years ago; and when I found him he did not in the least expect to see me. He has now a good business in a country town; he is in partnership with another man, and they are doing well. Two carts stood before the door taking out orders; for he serves the country round. He has a nice little house a few miles off which he has bought for himself. The children are doing well—some of them are married, and in comfortable homes of their own. He has had some trials in his family; and who is there who has not? Still he has everything to be thankful for, and he feels it. He was a respectable man when he went out; he had been in a small business not far from here, but owing to the great depression in trade and other causes his business had gone down, he had failed, and he with his wife and four or five children were on the very point of starvation. So badly off were they when we sent them out that on their arrival they had nothing whatever except the small sum of money we had provided them with. He took the first work that was offered him, and he told me that they carefully saved every farthing they could, and began by getting a little house and buying a stove, and so by degrees they gathered together necessary household goods. They have remained in the town to which they first went. Their elder children soon got work, and as they have moved out into homes of their own the younger ones have grown up to take their places in the old home. So I could tell you of a great many others—some of them have only been two years in Canada. None of them in the least expected a visit from me, and I saw them just as they were in their every-day life, and found how nice and comfortable they were in various ways. I cannot express how I was struck again and again by the wonderful contrast

between what I had known of these people here, and how I found them there.

And now as I come home again, and come to the East of London and see how the people are living; when one reads the terrible accounts lately published of Outcast London, and remembers that many who *used to form part of this Outcast London* are now *happy, comfortable, and prosperous* in Canada; when one sees and thinks of these things, surely one is stirred to fresh longings and endeavours to help some now in Lost London to that land of plenty.

Here is one case that I should like to mention. When driving from the station in one town we met a man walking home from his work. I knew him at once, and he soon recognized me, and hurried home to his wife to give her warning. In a minute or two I reached his house, and found his wife just laying out the supper in a nice airy room, and everything was clean, nice, and tidy. He showed me over his house; the neat little sitting-room, with its books, desk, and pictures; then the comfortable kitchen and the various bedrooms. Next he wanted me to see his garden, his kitchen garden well stocked, and his rabbits, his pig, and his wood for winter fuel. Altogether he seemed very comfortable indeed; while his children were all at work and prospering. The big ones worked off at some distance, and the little ones nearer home. When I remember such homes—and there are many of them in Canada, occupied by men and women who but lately were in poverty in the East of London—when I think of these things, and then read what we have all been reading lately in the newspapers, and see what may be seen any day in the East-end, I am compelled to say, “Is it not possible that hundreds of those families now in destitution and want might be removed there? Could they not be removed from a place where there is no room for them, where they are *not wanted*, where they are *in the way of each other*, and can hardly get food to eat, and know not

how to earn sufficient for rent, not to speak of clothing? What better could be done for them than that they should be enabled to go where they would not find themselves an encumbrance, but where they are *wanted*? where there is plenty of work, and good food, and such splendid air!" Oh, how different from the air of East London! *Here* the children are a burden; *there* they are a source of strength and prosperity. It is delightful to go there and see those that you remember here as pale, pinched children, now grown up, married, and settled comfortably; while those that were the little tiny ones when the family emigrated, are now grown up to be fine, strong young men and young women. Plenty of food, plenty of work, and the beautiful fresh air have worked wonders for them.

As to our way of sending out emigrants, I think nothing can be more satisfactory. The Midland Railway Company makes excellent arrangements for the journey to Liverpool; whilst at Liverpool the Messrs. Allan send to meet the emigrants at the station, and I think that on board Messrs. Allan's steamers they are most kindly treated. I have myself gone into the steerage at all hours of the day, and have found the people contented and exceedingly well looked after. Of course they are not *as comfortable* on board as on shore (I certainly am not myself), but the emigrants have plenty of food and kind treatment. It is wonderful to notice how even on board the hopelessness and wretchedness seem to die out of their faces; they are already looking forward, and once more *hope* is rekindled. And when the ship arrives at Quebec the Government agent, Mr. Stafford, kindly receives and looks after the emigrants, and sees that they have a good meal before starting forward on their journey. So again at Montreal, Mr. Daley, the agent, receives and looks after them; and on arriving at Toronto, Mr. Donaldson welcomes them and sees that they have plenty of food. When I was in Toronto I wanted to see an emigrant train arrive, and Mr.

Donaldson told me that I must be at his office at the station, by eight o'clock next morning, if I wanted to see the emigrants. I reached the office very shortly after eight o'clock, and was surprised to find it very quiet and very few there. I thought the train had not yet come in; but Mr. Donaldson soon told me it had come in, and the emigrants were *all gone* to work. Most of this set of people had been hired before the train reached Toronto, and farmers there had been waiting in their waggons to take hands off to their farms. They were all taken up at once. What a contrast to that *hardest* of all work, as many a poor man in London knows—the standing about all day long looking for work, and in vain, and then returning home at night with nothing to give the children! Think of the wonderful contrast of finding the work *waiting for you* and the farmers *wanting* you. I saw that morning at Toronto that even after all the emigrants were gone two or three people came up enquiring, “Are there none left?” “Are all gone?” “When are more coming?” I was much struck by Mr. Donaldson's manner. He has been for many years at his post as Government agent; he knows all the wants of the emigrants and the farmers, and he is *most* kind. So far as I could see, the Canadian Government is anxious to have such emigrants as we have sent; but they are exceedingly anxious to get only those people who *will work*. Of course, those who do not want to work need not go to Canada. The Canadian Government know that we endeavour to send the right kind of people, and that we are very particular only to send out those of good character. We accept none save those who can bring a good character from a previous employer, and also a reference from a clergyman, minister, priest, or visitor, &c., for we are unsectarian.

Our plan has been to send out *families*. We do not mind how many children there are; the more the better. We are glad to have numbers of children; for they have a chance of doing well and growing up strong in a land where they are

so much wanted. And certainly they said in Liverpool, when one of our parties was going in a tender to the steamer, that they never had sent out such a lot of children before. We are very thankful to say that all our people have gone over in safety, and there never has been any accident or trouble among them.

I have now been in Canada myself, and have seen how these families are getting on; of course, in seeing so many families I have found that they have not been exempt from the ordinary trials of life. There have been sickness, accidents, removals by death, and other trials; but, notwithstanding all these, the *general tone of life* is a perfect contrast to all that has gone before, as well as to that of the lives now being led by many thousands in London.

We never entertain any case without recommendation, because we have pledged ourselves to the Canadian Government to send out only people of good character; and we have kept to this rule, and our emigrants always have the character of being respectable. That fact inspires confidence, and leads to their ready welcome on arrival. We do not mind how large the family is, or how poor the people are, if only they are willing to work. Again and again I have had it said to me in Canada *by* people that we have sent out, "You *cannot help* getting on here, if only you will work and are steady."

I have told of a man who has been out fifteen or sixteen years, and of another who has been twelve years. I should like to tell of a family that went out two years ago. There seemed to be no human prospect of their going out. They were a very large family; some of the daughters were married. They lived not very far from here. Some here may know that we have a little mission-room at 149, Sidney Street, Mile End Road, and in connection with that mission we discovered this family. Father and sons could find no work; mother and daughters were working *day* and *night* at sack-making, and

their *only complaint* was, that they *could not get enough work* to do, although their earnings were but a small pittance. They wished to emigrate, and we told them they must try to help themselves. "We will do what we can," they said; and during all the winter they contrived to bring to us a shilling a week by sheer pinching. When the spring came they had saved between two and three pounds, and they were longing to start. Funds at the time were very low, we had many other applicants, and this family was a very large one, so we said, "Could not some of you go first?" "No, no; we've had a hard time of it, but we've been together, and we would rather wait on here than separate." We took the matter to God in prayer, and reminded them that they should do the same. We felt that it was very desirable this case should go out. But time went on, and the emigration season was passing, and still circumstances seemed hopeless. About that time my own health rather failed, and I was useless for a time, and as Lady Ripon was in India, it seemed as if nothing whatever could be done. At last I got better, and felt led afresh, and very earnestly, to ask the Lord what *was* to be done about this family, and I was, I believe, guided to write to two or three personal friends. More than enough money was promptly sent to me, and this whole family, and other families also, went out in July. I saw them last August in Canada, and one of the married daughters told me that the father's health was failing and the mother's also; the years of work and want in London had at last told on them. But she said, "What does it matter? *We* can well afford to keep them now. My husband has got more work than he can do. They are always pressing him to take on more. My brother has got plenty of work too." Already the people had got land, on which they had built houses that they were living in, and they were paying for all this gradually, as is the way there; and amongst them they had four nice houses. One son-in-law earned nearly three dollars a day, another two dollars, while the children were

between them earning something every week. "What *should* we have done," this married daughter said, "if we had remained in England?" The poor mother had failed so much that her mind was giving way; but that day, being conscious, she said to her daughter, "Give my love to the lady, and ask her to tell people in East London this from me: If they wish to remain poor, let them stay where they are; but if they ever wish to be different, let them do as we have done, and try and come to Canada." These people had been out but a very short time, yet the change was wonderful.

Now I come back to London, and I hear the terrible cry of those who are here in a state of deplorable poverty; but "terrible London" *never* reaches Canada, because *there* all find plenty of work and room to live. Of course Emigration work is only temporal relief, but as such I say it has proved a *complete success*. What I saw in Canada can only be described in the words—"God showed me His goodness plenteously." As I went into the nice comfortable rooms I felt again and again that I really could not speak; it was really so utterly delightful to see how happy the people were, and so contented—there was no excitement, but steady, quiet family-life and cheerfulness, and such safe caring for the children. Oh, how different from their lot in East London! I was also very much struck by the general and very great unselfishness and the kindness shown by the Canadians to the new-comers and to all. When any trouble comes to the emigrants they are sure to find sympathizers and helpers.

I must also tell of one of Miss Macpherson's boys who I saw in Canada. This boy was once a workhouse boy; but see him now—such a nice respectable young man! He is a traveller, I believe, to some firm, and he has a good bright, tidy home. His wife and children were out when we called; but he spoke of them in the happiest way; he showed us over his house, and we saw his neat sitting-room with his organ, his books, and his pictures, and every evi-

dence of prosperity. I was so astonished that I said to Miss Macpherson, "Is this, *really* one of *your* boys?" He was indeed. What would he have been here? Little else than a street Arab all his life; but as I saw him out there I could only thank God for His great mercy in giving him such an opening as this. That young man spent his whole afternoon in trying to find for me some of our people who had lately removed.

Some may think that what I have said is exaggerated, but I say it is *impossible* to exaggerate the difference between the homes that these people had here and their present homes in Canada.

I am very anxious to send out a great many more families next spring. It seems to me this East of London is *very* full now, and emigration not only helps those who go, but also those who remain, by lessening the pressure at home. We sent out a thousand souls after that terrible time fifteen years ago, and now we are anxious to send out another thousand in the coming spring. The whole organization for sending them is and has been in working order. Lady Ripon and I have always kept it going; when she is away I carry it on, and when I have been away she has carried it on.

After my journey to Canada, I can say that we have examined the system right through, and it has proved a complete success, and now we want to *apply it to many more*. Of course the great thing we want is money, and I trust those who are able will help us again. Many may be willing to send out a whole family, or perhaps even a single case. The *blessing* it is to those who have been sent I have thankfully shown; and I might multiply the cases indefinitely.

I found one man, for example, in the same town to which he went twelve years ago. He has prospered; he is now the principal bricklayer there. He has built the churches and schools, and employs a number of men. He has bought and partly paid for a farm of fifty acres. His son of nineteen

manages the farm, while his daughter looks after the dairy. Another case was one of the poorest we ever sent out from London, and one that seemed at first rather hopeless. He was a boy whose family were going out; but at the last moment some old companions got hold of this boy and tempted him to run off with them. All they wanted was to get hold of the clothes he had just put on and pawn them. Of course they soon turned him adrift when they had got all he had. He came back to us begging to be sent after his father and mother. He was put in a Home, and we often so feared he might run away that the door was well watched. One Sunday, however, the Lord brought home His word to this boy's heart, and there was no need to watch the door then. The Thursday after he sailed for Canada, and got into work there. He joined the Young Men's Christian Association, became a teetotaler, and working steadily, soon got on. His family had removed from the place they went to first, and so the lad could not find his father; and for some years the one object of that young man was to find his father, and he did find him last year. He is working as a cabinet-maker, is married, and has sent me a photograph of himself, his wife, and child. He is happy, prosperous, and contented.

I could only visit a very few of the many emigrants we have sent out; but as they were not picked cases in any way, and were in all parts of Canada, I consider they were a fair average of the whole. It is, I think, plain that emigration has been *proved* to be a *complete success*. It is no longer an *experiment*, but an *ascertained fact*. This being so, I feel justified in urging strongly the needs of the thousands who are now in East London's poverty, and who, could they be transplanted to Canada, would find plenty of work, and consequently plenty of food. I doubt not that we shall be enabled to send a large party in the spring, but I should so much like to give *hope* to some poor families *now*. If some

friends would promise to meet the cost of one or more families, the very thought of going out would fill them with *hope*, and the having *something better to look forward to* would nerve them during the want and privation and struggle of the winter months. If we can give a ray of hope it will energize them to efforts on their own part; for we always try to get every family to do *what they can* for themselves. It is not much they can do; but if one family raises £20, another £2, or a little less or more, the whole accumulates very nicely. Some years we have had over £300 raised by poor families in this way. This plan encourages self-help, and prepares for carefulness in Canada, as economy at the start is one great secret of prosperity.

I was so thankful to observe the warm, loving feeling still cherished towards their own country by our Emigrants, while they are one and all so thankful for being sent to Canada.

Now cannot we try and help others, equally poor, to go? We cannot touch the whole of this tremendous poverty and evil, but we can do something, and the highest word of praise that Jesus gave when He was on earth was just this—"She hath done *what she could*." Shall we not, each one of us, try to do what we can? If we do God will bless, and use that help for some of His suffering ones, and all to the glory of His name. When Miss Macpherson asked me to come here and tell about this work she gave me this verse—"Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited." And I would add, as regards Canada,

"*There He setteth the hungry that they may build them a city to dwell in, that they may sow their land, and plant vineyards to yield them fruits of increase. He blesseth them.*"

Shall we not try to help many more to go out to these places where they may sow the fields and plant vineyards and

receive the blessing of God? If any are willing to help individuals or families to go out I shall be glad to find suitable cases for them. We want to know just how far God would have us go, and how many He would have us send. I am always anxious not to go before God's will, but to follow where He leads. If any are inclined to promise the means to send some, I should be glad to know, as it is beginning to be time that we were making arrangements, and there are many poor people very anxious to go from their misery here.

In answer to questions asked by friends in the audience, Lady Hobart stated that the average cost was about £5 per adult, and half that for children under twelve. All who are sent are warmly clothed—not in new clothing, but generally cast-off clothing repaired and fitted. Special terms are offered by the Canadian Government to domestic servants and agricultural labourers; but the cost mentioned is the average for working men and their families.

All communications in reference to this movement should be made to Lady Hobart, Honorary Secretary of "The East London Family Emigration Fund," 15, Eccleston Square, S.W. Cheques to be crossed to Messrs. Cocks and Biddulph, 43, Charing Cross.



