G497

THE POPULATION QUESTION

ACCORDING TO

T. R. MALTHUS AND J. S. MILL.

GIVING

THE MALTHUSIAN THEORY

OF

OVER-POPULATION.

BY

CHARLES R. DRYSDALE, M.D.,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON, FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, SENIOR PHYSICIAN TO THE METROPOLITAN FREE HOSPITAL, LATE PHYSICIAN TO THE NORTH LONDON CONSUMPTION HOSPITAL, AND FELLOW OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON, PHYSICIAN TO THE RESCUE SOCIETY'S LOCK HOSPITAL, AND CONSULTING PHYSICIAN TO THE FARRINGDON GENERAL ISPENSARY.

"Only when, in addition to just institutions, the increase of mankind shall be under the deliberate guidance of a judicious foresight, can the conquests made from the powers of Nature by the intellect and energy of scientific discoverers become the common property of the species, and the means of improving and elevating the universal lot."—J. S. MILL.

LONDON:
GEO. STANDRING, 7 & 9 FINSBURY STREET, E.C.
1892.

PREFACE.

SINCE the memorable trial of Regina *versus* Bradlaugh and Besant, which took place on June 18, 1877, in the Court of Queen's Bench, before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn—a trial which, in the words of Professor Alexander Bain, was "an epoch in the history of our liberties"—the views of Malthus have become widely known among almost all classes of our English-speaking populations. Shortly after the acquittal of the defendants in this case, Mr. Edward Truelove, bookseller, of Holborn, London, was prosecuted for selling a work written by Senator Robert Dale Owen, of the United States, son of the great Socialist, Robert Owen. Mr. Truelove was convicted by a jury at the Central Criminal Court, and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment and a fine of £100. The fine was paid by the members of the Malthusian League, and Mr. Truelove left his prison and was welcomed home by a number of staunch friends and admirers. The odium of these prosecutions was so great that they put an end to the existence of the Society for the Suppression of Vice; and no prosecution of any Malthusian work took place for some years. Dr. H. A. Allbutt, of Leeds, published a little medical treatise, *The Wife's Handbook*, in which were included some hints as to how families could be kept within due limits. The General Medical Council attacked Dr. Allbutt for this work, and erased his name from the register of medical practitioners, on account of some advertisements the publication of which they considered as "infamous" conduct, a technical expression.

On December 12, 1888, a bookseller named Danby was prosecuted in Sydney, New South Wales, for publishing Mrs. Annie Besant's pamphlet entitled "The Law of Population." The prosecution failed, as two judges, Sir W. Windeyer and Justice Stephen, held that the work was not obscene. In his judgment, Sir W. Windeyer said of the pamphlet: "As it cannot be denied that the question propounded for discussion is of enormous importance, and that it is right to advocate in the abstract the expediency of checking the advancing tide of population, it appears to me impossible to contend that language which tells how this may be done is obscene, if it goes no further than is necessary for this purpose. . . I see nothing in the language which an earnest-minded man or woman of pure life and morals might not use to one of his or her own sex, if explaining to him or her what was necessary in order to understand the methods suggested by which married persons could prevent the number of their children increasing beyond their means of supporting them."

Unfortunately, this able judgment of Sir W. Windeyer is not considered to bind judges in Great Britain; and, consequently, we have had the sorry spectacle of a prosecution of a bookseller in Newcastle, in 1891, which entailed a conviction and a month's imprisonment; and another trial in Bombay, Hindostan, in July, 1892, where a bookseller has been fined £12 10s. for selling a little penny pamphlet written by Mr. Holmes, of Hanney, Wantage, Berkshire, England.

But the spread of Malthusian views is so rapid, and the example of France so convincing, that such trials only serve to help on the cause fought for by the Malthusian League and its friends, and which is certain to prevail in the near future.

C. R. DRYSDALE, M.D.

23 Sackville-street, Piccadilly, London, W.
October, 1892.

THE POPULATION QUESTION

ACCORDING TO

T. R. MALTHUS AND J. S. MILL.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

[For much of this chapter the author has to thank the work of the eminent perpetual Secretary of the Société de l'Economie Politique of Paris, M. Joseph Garnier.]

THOMAS ROBERT MALTHUS was born at the Rookery, in the neighbourhood of Dorking in the county of Surrey, on February 14th, 1766; he died at Bath on December 29th, 1834. His father, Daniel Malthus, was a man of some means, but as he had determined to leave his property to his eldest son, he embarked his second son, Thomas Robert, in the career of a churchman. His education was confided first to Richard Graves, the author of "The Spiritual Don Quixote," and he was afterwards sent to the Warrington Academy in Lancashire. He finished his school-days under the tuition of Gilbert of Wakefield, who was a renowned scholar at that time. When of the age of eighteen, Malthus went to Cambridge, and entered as student in Jesus College. He took his degree there in 1788, became Fellow of his College, and the year afterwards entered the Church. Whilst remaining a short time in the house of his father at Dorking, he performed the duties of curate in the neighbourhood.

About this time there was a great fermentation in the minds of men all throughout Europe, by reason of the philosophical movement that had been going on, and on account of the French Revolution. William Godwin, an author

already known to fame, had just published his work on "Political Justice," in which he laid down the idea that immorality, and the different calamities of the human race, had no other cause than bad government. He proposed the equality of all persons in society as the only way for preventing the effects of bad political institutions. This work had many adversaries and partisans in England, among the latter of whom was Daniel Malthus, the father of the great writer. Thomas Robert, his son, had learnt in the writings of Adam Smith, whose work was published in 1776, and of David Hume, who had published his essays after reading the works of J. J. Rousseau, that, if bad governments contribute to make men miserable and vicious, the ignorance and degradation of the lower classes contribute powerfully, on the other hand, both in forming and in maintaining such bad governments. Malthus was, then, not likely to be deluded as to the nature of the results to be expected from political reforms.

Godwin published in 1797 a review called the *Inquirer*, which was composed of a series of essays upon education, morals, and literature. One of these essays, on the "Prodigality of Avarice," tempted Malthus to take up his pen, although quite a young man at that time, and he replied by an "Essay on the Principle of Population," which was published anonymously, and which must be looked upon less as a first edition than as a preparation for the celebrated work he published five years later.

Malthus combated the position of those writers in whose eyes the perfectibility of men and of political institutions was without limits, and reduced to a very low figure the influence of bad governments: he defended the rights of property, and combated the different socialistic theories which were at that day in the air: he showed, also, that human societies had at all times had only two obstacles to their increase, namely, Vice and Misery: and he pointed to the too rapid increase of population in proportion to subsistence, as being the principal cause of these obstacles.

The work of Malthus, which was in direct opposition to all the Utopias and systems imagined for securing the happiness of the race by popular writers, and which placed social phenomena in an entirely new light, was attacked and defended in a most lively way, as Godwin's work on "Political Justice" had been. This caused Malthus to go more deeply into the question. He had before this made use for his argument of the works of Hume, Wallace, Adam Smith, and

Price. Dr. Wallace, a clergyman, who died in 1771, had written an "Essay on Population," after reading Hume's work: and Dr. Price was a dissenting minister, who died in 1791, and who published several treatises concerning the finances and debts of England, and an "Essay on Population." Malthus first of all made inquiries as to the influence which the principle of population, he had just enunciated, had exercised on nations at different epochs of history; and then he became anxious to add to the lessons of past ages that of his own. He determined to travel through Europe for the purpose of making inquiries on this point.

In the spring of 1799 he, therefore, accompanied by three other Fellows of Jesus College, Cambridge, among the number being Daniel Clarke, who is known for his travels in different countries of Europe, set out on a trip to the Continent. He visited Denmark, Sweden, and a part of Russia, and subsequently Switzerland and Savoy. The result of these travels was the publication of the second edition of the "Essay on the Principle of Population," in 1803, which received still greater attacks even than his first essay had done. In this work, which was a continuation of the first, but which was new in many respects, Malthus completed his ideas by greater length of detail, and by the narration of numerous facts borrowed from history and from the situation of different countries; he applied these observations to institutions which had always been looked on as beneficent, and exposed the dangers of philanthropy when not guided by intelligence: he pointed out to the working classes that the best method of raising the rate of wages permanently was to exhibit the greatest care in the matter of marriage.

A year after the publication of his work, Malthus was named Professor of History and Political Economy at the East India Company's College of Haileybury, in the neighbourhood of London, and about that date he married. He fulfilled for some thirty years his professional duties and those of a clergyman of the English Church; and it was during this time of his life that he put his hand thrice again to the editing of his celebrated work, whilst he pondered on other questions embraced by the science of political economy, and was tempted to publish other writings, such as two on the Corn Laws (1814 and 1815); one on Rent (1815); on the Principles of Political Economy (1819); and on the Definitions of Political Economy (1827).

These dissertations of Malthus much contributed to the

elucidation of several principles, and especially that of Rent, with which Ricardo's name is so imperishably connected. Ricardo, indeed, says in the preface to his "Principles of Political Economy," that the true doctrine of the Rent was published for the first time by Mr. Malthus in an essay entitled, "Researches into the Nature of Rent," and by Dr. West, a member of the University of Oxford, in his essay on "The Employment of Capital in Agriculture."

What distinguishes Malthus, says M. Joseph Garnier, is his love of truth. This love of truth, says Charles Comte, which never swerved during his lifetime, gave birth to and maintained in him the private virtues which distinguished him; such as justice, prudence, temperance, and simplicity. He was of a most gentle disposition. He had such an empire over his passions, and was so indulgent to others, that persons who had lived with him for some fifty years assure us that they had scarcely ever seen him ruffled, never in anger, never uplifted, and never downcast. No harsh word, no expression in the least uncharitable, ever escaped from his lips against any one; and although he was more a target for unjust accusations and calumnies than any writer of his own, or perhaps of any age, he was rarely heard to complain of such attacks, and he never made any reprisals. He was very sensible of the approbation of enlightened and wise men, and he put a great price on the good opinion of the public. But unmerited outrages touched him but slightly, so convinced was he of the truth of his principles and the purity of his views, so prepared was he for contradiction and even for the repugnance which his doctrines were likely to excite. His conversation was naturally directed towards such subjects as relate to the happiness of society, and which he had peculiarly studied; he was then attentive, serious, and easily moved. He enunciated his opinion in so clear a way, and so intelligibly, that it was easily seen that it was the result of deep reflection. In addition to this, he was naturally gay and playful, and as ready to take part in the innocent pleasures of youth, as to encourage and direct his young pupils in their studies.

He was among the most zealous partizans of parliamentary reform, and desired to see Government setting out in the direction of progress. True to his political opinions at a time when these were far from leading men to fortune, he never urged them as a title to favour when they had triumphed; nor did he ever entertain the idea of making science the

stepping-stone of ambition. When his principles became the foundation of that bill which reformed the legislation of the Poor Laws, there was no want of calumnies and insults thrown upon him by the enemies of reform. His adversaries tried to make him responsible for the errors contained in the Government measure; whilst, although the partizans of this bill showered praises upon him in the discussions to which it gave rise in the House of Commons, the gratitude of his political friends and of the nation went no farther than this. But no one ever heard Mr. Malthus complain, either of the insults of the first class of men, or of the negligence of the second. It was, it will be remembered, not until 1834 that Parliament, after a well-known inquiry, which confirmed Malthus's views, decided to amend the Poor Laws of England.

It must have been a sincere pleasure to the illustrious economist to see the legislation of his country thus influenced by the opinions which had caused such violent attacks on himself. Mr. Malthus was at that time in his sixty-seventh year, and apparently in excellent health; but about the middle of December, 1834, on arriving in London from Bath, to spend Christmas together with his family in the house of his father-in-law, he felt ill, a disease of the heart was discovered, and he died of it on the 29th of the month.

The most celebrated work of Malthus is his "Essay on the Principle of Population." This work appeared under the following title:—"An Essay on the Principle of Population, as it affects the Future Improvement of Society," London, 1798, one volume in 8vo., anonymous. The second edition was published in 1803, in two volumes. The fourth was published in 1807, the fifth in 1817, and the sixth in 1826. Four editions of this work have appeared in France; and it has recently been reprinted in London by Messrs. Reeves and Turner.

The essay on Population is divided into five books. In the two first of these the author explains how the obstacles have acted which have prevented the increase of population among ancient and modern societies. This first part of his work is a magnificent treatise on the statistics of history. It is above all remarkable for the extent of its views, the facility with which the numerical data are discussed, the lucidity of the consequences deduced from them, for the nature of the problems laid before modern statisticians for solution, and by the novelty of the questions he opens out for the investigation of historians.

In the third book he examines with respect to their influence on the principle of population, the different social theories afloat in his day, and which are similar to those which we have seen appear of late years, as well as different economical systems referring to agriculture and the grain trade. In the fourth book he explains his opinion concerning moral restraint, charity, and the poor rates, and analyses and combats different schemes for the bettering the lot of the poor. In an Appendix, he sums up his conclusions, refutes some new objections and new theories, and especially that of the right of the poor to maintenance. He also points out that moral restraint, far from contradicting the laws of nature, tends to the production of a healthy and vigorous population, and an increase which brings with it neither vice nor misery.

"It is impossible," says Garnier, "not to have recourse to Malthus's work when we desire to study seriously the principal elements for the solution of the numerous questions raised by the principle of population, and the vast problem of poverty, or, what amounts to the same, the problem of the physical and moral amelioration of the most numerous and poorest citizens. Well, this has been neglected hitherto, we fear not to affirm, by the majority of those who have approached these delicate subjects in the Press, in Parliament, in the Pulpit, or in the Administration."

It may be mentioned that, previous to Malthus, several writers had had a dim idea of the principle of population. Thus Montesquieu, in his famous work "L'Esprit des Lois," says that whenever a place is found where two persons can live comfortably, a marriage will take place. Nature prompts to this sufficiently when she is not arrested by the difficulty of getting a living. Mirabeau, too, the father of the great Mirabeau, in his treatise on population, entitled "Ami des Hommes" (1755), remarks that the measure of subsistence is the measure of population. Quesnay also wrote: "It is wise to pay less attention to the augmentation of population than to the increase of the revenues." Adam Smith, the great founder of modern political economy, writes in 1775, in his "Wealth of Nations" (Book I., chapter viii.), that naturally all species of animals multiply in proportion to the means of subsistence, and none can multiply beyond this. He adds, that in the greater part of Europe in his day it had been said that it would require five hundred years for the population to double, whilst, in several of our colonies in North America it doubles, he hears, in twenty or twenty-five years.

Smith observes that countries do not become populous in proportion as they produce materials for clothing and lodging people, but only in proportion to the numbers which their produce will feed. When food is not wanting it is easy to find the things necessary for clothing and lodging, whilst we may have the latter in abundance, and often have great difficulty in procuring food.

Professor Dugald Stewart, writing in 1792, observes that we can no more prevent people from becoming populous than we can prevent a tree from growing. But, in order to live, food is required; and this it is which arrests population. Arthur Young also, writing in 1787, observes that "the care of multiplication of population ought not for one moment to occupy the attention of governments. Find employment for men, and they will multiply of their own accord."

The principal defenders of the doctrine of Malthus have been J. B. Say (1803); Destutt de Tracy (1823); James Mill (1824); MacCulloch (1825); Sismondi (1829); Duchatel (1829); Chalmers (1832); Dunoyer (1835); Rossi (1840); Thornton (1846); J. S. Mill (1848); Molinari (1855); Dupuynode (1855); with Ricardo, Senior, Alexander Bain, Cairnes, Fawcett, and in short the whole body of scientific political economists throughout Europe. One or two ephemeral attempts have been made to upset the theory of population. Dr. Loudon, an English physician, had a theory that under-feeding encouraged procreation, and cites, in defence of this idea, how that a lady, who had possessed ample means, and remained sterile, became fertile as soon as she had lost her fortune; and theorists of this school say that in Sologne, in France, it is found that the carps, which are abundantly fed in certain ponds, do not breed until they are put into other ponds, where they are half starved. They, however, seem to admit that, whilst the *female* sex is likely to engender more rapidly when not highly fed, poor living tends to make the *male* sex less prolific. Mayer ("Rapports Conjugaux," 1874, p. 232), says:—"So that it is permitted to hope that by the alleviation of misery the equilibrium of population will arise, and it will no longer be necessary to repress a calamitous fecundity, having regard only to the present condition of things. When the chances of mortality shall have much diminished, by a better organisation of labour and juster division of happiness, the keeping up of the species will no longer need to be guaranteed by an exag-

gerated number of births." Dr. John Chapman and Mr. Herbert Spencer share these views.

At this moment all that remains of opposition takes the form of persecution of the disciples of Malthus and Mill by the so-called Evangelical party; whilst the only way of answering the irrefutable arguments of his disciples is by passing them by in the Senate, in the Pulpit, and in the Press. It is time that such an unwise state of things should cease.

CHAPTER II.

THE POPULATION LAW, ACCORDING TO T. R. MALTHUS.

In the year 1798, it is worthy of remark, two wonderful essays appeared from the pens of two of the foremost of the sons of England. The first was that celebrated work of a Gloucester surgeon, Edward Jenner, on *Variolæ Vaccinæ*, in which he enunciated a discovery which has been the means of saving many millions from a hideous and painful disease. His native country paid honour to Dr. Edward Jenner even during his own life; although I question whether there is any statue to his memory in London. Other countries have raised monuments to Jenner, and England is slow to show its gratitude to its truest benefactors. Mr. Malthus also wrote his essay in 1798; but, alas! instead of gratitude for his great discovery, ever since his death the name of that great man has seldom been mentioned in any popular assembly or journal until quite recently, unless for the purpose of attacking it. Fortunately, there seems at this juncture greater likelihood for his doctrines being listened to and even approved of than has ever yet been the case; and it will, therefore, be useful to explain rather fully what he said, and what has been added to his thesis by other subsequent writers—for instance, Mr. J. S. Mill.

In Book I. of his third edition (1806, London), Mr. Malthus observes that—"In an inquiry concerning the improvement of society, the mode of conducting the subject which naturally presents itself is—

"1. To investigate the causes that have hitherto impeded the progress of mankind towards happiness; and

"2. To examine the probability of the total or partial removal of these causes in future."

"The principal object of this essay (he says) is to examine the effects of one great cause intimately connected with the very nature of man, which, though it has been constantly and powerfully operating since the commencement of society, has been little noticed by the writers who have treated this subject. The cause to which I allude is the constant tendency in all animated life to increase beyond the nourishment prepared for it.

"Dr. Franklin has observed that there is no bound to the prolific nature of plants or animals but what is made by their crowding and interfering with each other's means of subsistence. Were the face of the earth, he says, vacant of other plants, it might be gradually sowed and overspread with one kind only—as, for instance, with fennel; and were it empty of other inhabitants, it might in a few ages be replenished from one nation only, as, for instance, with Englishmen.

"This is incontrovertibly true. Through the animal and vegetable kingdoms Nature has scattered the seeds of life abroad with the most profuse and liberal hand; but has been comparatively sparing in the room and the nourishment necessary to rear them. The germs of existence contained in this earth, if they could freely develop themselves, would fill millions of worlds in the course of a few thousand years. Necessity, that imperious, all-pervading law of Nature, restrains them within the prescribed bounds. The race of plants and the race of animals shrink under this great restrictive law, and man cannot by any efforts of reason escape from it.

"In plants and irrational animals the view of the subject is simple. They are all impelled by a powerful instinct to the increase of their species, and this instinct is interrupted by no doubts about providing for their offspring. Wherever, therefore, there is liberty, the power of increase is exerted; and the superabundant effects are repressed afterwards by want of room and nourishment.

"The effects of this check in man are more complicated Impelled to the increase of his species by an equally powerful instinct, reason interrupts his career, and asks him whether he may not bring beings into the world for whom he cannot provide the means of support. If he attend to this natural suggestion, the restriction too frequently produces vice. But as by that law of our nature which makes food necessary to

the life of man, population can never actually increase beyond the lowest nourishment capable of supporting it—a strong check on population from the difficulty of acquiring food must be constantly in operation. This difficulty must fall somewhere, and must necessarily be severely felt in some or other of the various forms of misery, or the fear of misery, by a large portion of mankind.

"In the Northern States of America, where the means of subsistence have been more ample, the manners of the people more pure, and the checks to early marriage fewer than in any of the modern States of Europe, the population has been found to double itself, for above a century and a-half successively, in less than in each period of twenty-five years. Yet even during these periods, in some of the towns, the deaths exceeded the births, a circumstance which clearly proves that in these parts of the country which supplied this deficiency the increase must have been much more rapid than the general average.

"It appears from some recent calculations and estimates, that from the first settlement of America, to the year 1800, the periods of doubling have been but very little above twenty years. I have lately had an opportunity of seeing some extracts from the sermon of Dr. Styles. Speaking of Rhode Island, he says that though the period of doubling for the whole colony is twenty-five years, yet that it is different in different parts, and within-land is twenty and fifteen years. He mentions afterwards, that the county of Kent doubles in twenty years, and the county of Providence in eighteen.

"From a return to Congress in 1782, the population seemed to be 2,389,300, and in the census of 1790, 4,000,000; increase in nine years, 1,610,700; from which deduct 10,000 per annum for European settlers, about 90,000; and allow for their increase at five per cent. for four and a half years, which will be 20,250; the remaining increase during these nine years will be 1,500,450, which is nearly seven per cent., and consequently the period of doubling at this rate would be less than sixteen years."

In the back settlements, where the sole employment is agriculture, and vicious customs and unwholesome occupations are little known, the population has been found to double itself in fifteen years. Even this extraordinary rate of increase is probably short of the utmost power of popula-

tion. Sir W. Petty supposes a doubling possible in so short a time as ten years.

Mr. Malthus proceeds as follows :

"It may safely be pronounced, therefore, that population, when unchecked, goes on doubling itself every twenty-five years, or increases in a geometrical proportion. A thousand millions are just as easily doubled every twenty-five years by the power of population as a thousand. But the food to support the increase from the greater number will by no means be obtained with the same facility. When acre has been added to acre, till all the fertile land is occupied, the yearly increase of food must depend upon the melioration of the land already in possession. This is a stream which from the nature of all soils, instead of increasing, must be gradually diminishing.

"If it be allowed that by the best possible policy, and great encouragements to agriculture, the average produce of this island could be doubled in the next twenty-five years, it will be allowing probably a greater increase than could with reason be expected. In the next twenty-five years, it is impossible to suppose that the produce could be quadrupled. It would be contrary to all our knowledge of the properties of land. The improvement of the barren parts would be a work of time and labour; and it must be evident to those who have the slightest acquaintance with agricultural subjects, that in proportion as cultivation extended, the additions that could yearly be made to the former average produce must be gradually and regularly diminishing. That we may be the better able to compare the increase of population and food, let us make a supposition which, without pretending to accuracy, is clearly more favourable to the power of production in the earth, than any experience that we have had of its qualities will warrant.

"Let us suppose that the yearly additions which might be made to the former average produce, instead of decreasing, which they certainly would do, were to remain the same; and that the produce of this island might be increased every twenty-five years, by a quantity equal to what it at present produces. The most enthusiastic speculator cannot suppose a greater increase than this. In a few centuries it would make every acre in the island like a garden.

"If this supposition be applied to the whole earth, and if it be allowed that the subsistence for man, which the earth affords, might be increased every twenty-five years by a

quantity equal to what it at present produces, this will be supposing a rate of increase much greater than we can imagine that any possible exertions of mankind could make it.

"It may fairly be pronounced, therefore, that considering the present average state of the earth, the means of subsistence, under circumstances the most favourable to human industry, could not possibly be made to increase faster than in an arithmetical ratio.

"The necessary effects of these two different rates of increase, when brought together, will be very striking. Let us call the population of this island 11,000,000 (Mr. Malthus writes in 1806), and suppose the present produce equal to the easy support of such a number. In the first twenty-five years the population would be 22,000,000, and the food being also doubled, the means of subsistence would be equal to this increase. In the next twenty-five years the population would be 44,000,000, and the means of subsistence only equal to the support of 33,000,000. In the next period the population would be 88,000,000, and the means of subsistence just equal to the support of half of that number. And, at the conclusion of the first century, the population would be 176,000,000, and the means of subsistence only equal to the support of 55,000,000, leaving a population of 121,000,000 totally unprovided for."

After showing that our race has the power, when supplied with the necessaries of life, to double in some twenty or thirty years, Mr. Malthus shows, in his work, that the way in which population is checked in various countries is either by prevention of births, or by the death of those who are born in an untimely manner. He shows that the checks are either through moral restraint, *i. e.*, late marriages and chastity, vice, including prostitution, and the prevention of children being born; and, lastly, by the positive check, which includes extreme poverty, great towns, excesses, wars, plagues, and famines.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHECKS TO POPULATION.

It will thus be seen that Mr. T. R. Malthus held that there was not the least chance of happiness for the poorer classes of

mankind, so long as they remained unaware of the danger of giving birth to large numbers of children, following in this the instincts we all possess, in common with other members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. All improvements in government or in science and art, he showed, would end only in shallows—low wages, and suffering among the poorest classes, so long as they were thoughtless in this matter. He therefore recommended late marriages and celibacy, as the best of all methods of attaining happiness, wealth, and tranquillity. His followers have agreed with him as to the nature of the evil to be combated; but most of the modern Malthusians advocate small families in preference to late marriages, as the remedy for these sufferings.

Since the death of the great discoverer of the law of population in 1834, hosts of works have been written in praise or dispraise of his discovery. Mr. James Mill, and his illustrious son, Mr. J. S. Mill, the greatest thinker of the nineteenth century, are among the most notable disciples of Malthus. These gentlemen take the population principle as axiomatic, and Mr. J. S. Mill looks upon it as the foundation of all social morality.

I am sure that no one can object to my quoting at length from a writer so dear to the whole English nation, and so much appreciated by the *élite* of the working classes of this country.

Speaking of the reason why Mr. Malthus's law of population has not yet been understood by the bulk of mankind, Mr. J. S. Mill (chapter xiii. of his work on the "Principles of Political Economy"), after proving the law of population of Malthus, and the necessity of a far greater restraint on the numbers of persons born, in order to attain to a happy state of society, thus writes:

"If the bulk of the human race are always to remain as at present, slaves to toil in which they *have* no interest, and therefore *feel* no interest; drudging from early morning till late at night for bare necessaries, and with all the intellectual and moral deficiencies which that implies; without resources either in mind or feelings; untaught, for they cannot be better taught than fed; selfish, for all their thoughts are required for themselves; without interests or sentiments as citizens or members of society, and with a sense of injustice rankling in their minds, equally for what they have not, and for what others have; I know not what there is which should make a person with any capacity or reason, concern himself

about the destiny of the human race. There would be no wisdom for any one, but in extracting from life, with epicurean indifference, as much personal satisfaction to himself, and those with whom he sympathises, as it can yield without injury to any one, and letting the unmeaning bustle of so-called civilised existence roll unheeded by. But there is no ground for such a view of human affairs. Poverty, like most social evils, exists because men follow their brute instincts without due consideration. But society is possible precisely because man is not necessarily a brute.

"Civilisation in every one of its aspects is a struggle against the animal instincts. Over some even of the strongest of them it has shown itself capable of acquiring abundant control. It has artificialised large portions of mankind to such an extent, that of many of their most natural inclinations they have scarcely a vestige or remembrance left. If it has not brought the instinct of population under as much restraint as is needful, we must remember that it has never seriously tried. What efforts it has made have mostly been in the contrary direction. Religion, morality, and statesmanship have vied with one another in incitement to marriage, and to the multiplication of the species, so it be but in wedlock.

"Religion has not even yet discontinued its encouragements. The Roman Catholic clergy (of any other clergy it is unnecessary to speak, since no other have any considerable influence over the poorer classes) everywhere think it their luty to promote marriage, in order to prevent fornication. There is still in many minds a strong religious prejudice against the true doctrine. The rich, provided the consequences do not touch themselves, think it impugns the wisdom of Providence to suppose that misery can result from the operation of a natural propensity: the poor think that God never sends mouths but He sends meat. No one would guess, from the language of either, that man had any voice or choice in the matter.

"So complete is the confusion of ideas on the whole subject, owing in a great degree to the mystery in which it is shrouded by a spurious delicacy, which prefers that right and wrong should be mismeasured and confounded on one of the subjects most momentous to human welfare, rather than that the subject should be freely spoken of and discussed. People are little aware of the cost to mankind of this scrupulosity of speech. The diseases of society can, no more than corporal

maladies, be prevented or cured without being spoken about in plain language. All experience shows that the mass of mankind never judge of moral questions for themselves, never see anything to be right or wrong, until they have been frequently told it; and who tells them that they have any duties in the matter in question while they keep within matrimonial limits? Who meets with the smallest condemnation, or rather, who does not meet with sympathy and benevolence, for any amount of evil which he may have brought upon himself and those dependent on him, by this species of incontinence? While a man who is intemperate in drink is discountenanced and despised by all who profess to be moral people, it is one of the chief grounds made use of in appeals to the benevolent, that the applicant has a large family, and is unable to maintain them. Little improvement can be expected in morality until the producing large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness, or any other physical excess. But whilst the aristocracy and clergy are foremost to set an example of this species of incontinence, what can be expected from the poor?"

Mr. Malthus's *preventive check* to population exists to an immense extent in all European civilised states. To judge of the amount of it, we have but to look around us and observe the numbers of women who, especially among the more comfortable classes, pass a life of chastity and celibacy, thus constituting a reserve force of possible mothers, who could, of course, give birth to numerous children, were the state of society such as to admit of this, without causing enormous suffering and death.

Unfortunately this way of preventing over-population is fraught with evils. In the first place celibacy is a state of great privation and suffering, and Dr. Bertillon of Paris has, moreover, proved what theory would readily have shown us, that in France, Holland, and Belgium, married persons, especially males, live considerably longer than single ones, and are, moreover, much less subject to become insane, criminal, or vicious. In this country at present, female celibacy is a great and increasing evil, and no theory of society can hold its ground which is based on the idea that late marriages are compatible with social well-being. In an article on *Mariage* in the *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique des Sciences Médicales*, by that most distinguished of French writers on medical statistics, Dr. Bertillon (vol. v. p. 7, et seq.,) I find that, putting aside married persons of both sexes, and persons beyond

60 and below 15, there are in England 68·6 men and 61·9 women per 1000, who marry annually. France has a corresponding number of 48·5, and Belgium only 38. In France the figures seem to have been nearly stationary since the commencement of the century, but marriages are much less common in Sweden than they formerly were. In Sweden the average age of women at marriage is 27; in France it is 25. England and Hungary are, doubtless, in Europe, the two countries where the population marries at the earliest age. In France, Bertillon shows, that the mean age of young women at marriage is 24·92, and in England 24·3.

Of 1000 inhabitants above the age of 15 in France, there are 560 married; and in England 536. With regard to the *Fecundity of Marriages*, statisticians, in the hope of discerning the number of children to a marriage, have had recourse to an artifice of figures, in dividing the mean annual number of births by the mean annual number of marriages. The fecundity of English marriages is about 4, in France it is scarcely 3; and these 3 are reduced to 1·92 at twenty years of age. Very few women give birth to children after 40 or 45. Of every hundred women from 15 to 40 years of age in France there are 26·1 children born annually; in England 39·4. According to the conclusions of special inquiries, it is from 25 to 30 for men, and after 20 for women, that marriage appears to be most favourable to health.

Criminality of married and unmarried persons.—From a series of statistics from 1840-45 and 1861-68, Dr. Bertillon arrives at the conclusion that the number of accused persons compared with the population above the age of 15, being in the case of bachelors taken as 100, that of married men is at present only 49·25, in crimes against the person; and 46 for crimes against property. In the case of women, the number of married women accused being called 100, that of unmarried women rises to 245. Hence women are much more tempted morally than men by marriage being postponed.

Proudhon has justly said that the married couple is, in our society, the organism *par excellence* of virtue and justice; but the Catholic Church is far from agreeing in this opinion. M. Duruy had the luminous idea, in order to moderate the scholastic pride of the clergy, to ascertain from the judicial records, the crimes committed by members of the different religious teaching bodies, compared with those committed by lay schoolmasters, that is, by fathers of families. He

found, and published in the *Moniteur* (*journal officiel*,) that in a period of time of five months, in round numbers, 34,873 lay schools furnished 19 crimes and 80 misdemeanours; whereas 3,531 clerical schools furnished 23 crimes and 32 misdemeanours (*délits*). Thus schools taught by religious orders living in celibacy had four times as many crimes and twelve times as many misdemeanours as those kept by fathers of families; "and what crimes! the soiling of innocence itself!"

With regard to insanity, of 10,000 persons of either sex, we find, among male celibates, 3·95 insane; and only 2·17 among married men; and of 10,000 single women, we find 3·4 insane; whilst there are but 1.9 among married women. Thus the preservation exercised by the married state is so great that it reduces the danger of insanity to nearly one-half. Bertillon then speaks of the *Mortality of Single and Married persons.*—Out of 1000 men from 40 to 45 years of age, there are among bachelors 16 deaths, and among widowers 18·89; whilst of the same numbers of married men of like age there are only 9·55 deaths in France. In the same way, from 45 to 50, there are 11·45 deaths among married men, 19·6 among old bachelors; and 32·1 among widowers. From the age of 30 to 35 the mortality of married men being 100, that of bachelors is 169, and of widowers 281. Between 35 and 40 the mortality of married men being 100, that of celibates is 175, and of widowers is 233. Between the ages of 50 and 55, the figure for married men being 100, 165 and 172 are the numbers for celibates, and widowers; and from 55 to 60 the cyphers become 149 for bachelors, and 172 for widowers. From 60 to 65 the figures are 141 and 146; and from 65 to 70, 133 and 143.

One exception to this law, discovered by Bertillon, occurs in the earliest adult age, among males. Thus from 18 to 20 it is no longer a profit but a loss; indeed an enormous peril for the young man, when he marries before the age of 20. When single his mortality is but 14; married it rises to 100. The mortality of such young married men is six or eight times as great as that of the single. Bertillon therefore advises that marriage ought not to be made legal for males before the age of 21. The same mortality for young married men is found to be true in Belgium and in Holland.

From 25 to 30, the mortality of married men being 100, that of single ones is 163. Between 20 and 25, the com-

parative mortality of the celibate is but 144; and Bertillon suspects that it is no advantage at all to the health of the young man to marry before 22.

In France, at all ages, except the two first, the conjugal state is also more favourable than celibacy to the health of women. Thus, from 40 to 45, the mortality among married women being 100, that of single women is 131; from 45 to 50, the figure is 147; from 50 to 55, it is 148; from 55 to 60, it is 140; and from 60 to 65, it is 131. In Belgium and Holland the advantage of marriage to the woman is not felt, as far as statistics show, until 45 years of age.

As to the mortality of young married women, in France, below the age of 25, marriage becomes a notable cause of mortality. The dangers of child-birth, and especially of the *first child*, account for this. France is especially favoured in this respect, however; and it is not after all a very great danger that young French mothers run, since between 20 and 25 the figure of mortality for maids being 100, it only rises to 119 for young married women, whilst it is as high as 157 in Belgium, and 173 in Holland.

Between 15 and 20, the mortality of maidens being taken as 100, that of young married women rises to 158 in France and Belgium, and to 208 in Holland. The condition of widowerhood is much more prejudicial, it seems to the male than widowhood to the female. By the loss of the wife, the chances of mortality in the male sex increase everywhere, and in the most remarkable proportions. This notable increase doubles or triples the part played by death in Belgium, in France, and in Paris. Its maximum is in relation to the youth of the widower; thus, before 25 it triples and quadruples the danger of death everywhere. This aggravation becomes attenuated in France after the fortieth year, but persists in Belgium and in Paris.

In France, mothers of families, whether married or widows, at each period of life after 25 pay a less tribute to death than young and old maids of like ages.

The advantages of married life with regard to longevity have been pointed out by Casper, in his article entitled "De l'Influence du Mariage sur la Durée de la Vie Humaine" in the "Annales d'Hygiène," pub. 1835, t. 14, p. 235. He shows that from 20 to 30 years of age 4·3 bachelors and 2·6 single women die, as against 3·1 married men and 4·7 married women. From 30 to 45 the figures are, he alleges, 27 bachelors and 24·5 single women, against 17·9 married men and

16·5 women. This appears to be an exaggeration, according to Dr. Bertillon's more accurate figures.

In Scotland, Mr. James Stark read a paper before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, in December, 1866, "On the Influence of Marriage on the Mean Mortality of the Two Sexes in Scotland." He found that from 20 to 25 there were 1,174 deaths among 100,000 bachelors, whilst among the same number of married men there were only 597, or about one half. Between 25 and 30, when the number of married people in Scotland becomes nearly equal with that of the single, there were in one year 1,369 deaths among 100,000 bachelors, and only 865 among the same number of married men. From 30 to 35, the figure for bachelors being 1,475 deaths, that for married men is 907; from 40 to 45, bachelors have a death-rate of 1,689 per 100,000, and married men only 1,248; from 60 to 65, the figures are 4,330 and 3,385. Even at the age of 70 the figures given by Stark are 10,144 against 8,058. If now we ask what is the mean age of mortality in marriage, and among single men, from 20 up till the end of life, we find it for married men stated to be 59½ years and for bachelors 40. Dr. Stark concludes that after 20 years of age persons who marry have a probability of 19½ more years of life than single men.

The influence of marriage is more marked in the case of males than of females in Scotland. An interesting *résumé* of Dr. Stark's paper will be found in the "Ann. d'Hygiène," pub. 1868, t. 29, p. 34.

With regard to the tendency to suicide, the judicial statistics of France show that, out of 1,000,000 of single men there are 273 suicides, whilst 1,000,000 of widowers furnish no less than 628, and in a like number of married men there are 246.

The two sexes are thus incited towards suicide by celibacy and the widowed state. Bertillon advises young men to marry between the ages of 22 and 25; and he seems to think that the age for women to marry is about 20.

It has been objected to Bertillon's statistics that, in the first place, the mortality among single men would naturally be greater at all ages than that of married men, for the simple reason that the latter are probably the more favoured by nature and fortune, as proved by the fact that they have obtained one of the prizes of life—marriage—which the single men have failed to secure. But the mortality of widowers also is so much higher than that of married men that,

for my part, I think it is clear that this is but a verification by statistics of the advantage of the exercise of functions which a candid physiologist might easily predict. And, with regard to the superior mortality of very young married women over that of their married sisters above the age of 25, it has been objected that the ruling cause of this is to be looked for in the fact that it is the first birth that is so dangerous. No doubt there is a difficulty in replying to this; but it remains to be seen whether first births would be so dangerous, were they to occur after 25, as they are before 22.

In addition to Bertillon's arguments against celibacy, we have M. Villermé, in the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Médicales," saying: "It is assuredly true that absolute and involuntary abstinence is the most common cause of hysteria." Mr. Holmes Cootes, Surgeon to Bethlehem Hospital, said, in a meeting of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society in January, 1859, that: "No doubt incontinence was a great sin; but the evils connected with continence were productive of far greater misery to society. Any person could bear witness to this who had experience in the wards of lunatic asylums." The most weighty, perhaps, of all English witnesses is Sir Benjamin Brodie, who, at the Birmingham Social Science meeting, is reported to have said in the course of a discussion on prostitution, that: "The evils of celibacy were so great, that he would not mention them; but that they quite equalled those of prostitution." Dr. Copland, in his most learned "Dictionary of Medicine," lays the greatest stress on the production of disease in single women of all classes by thoughtless habits. Indeed, it is abundantly clear that the non-use of important organs must lead to suffering and disease. I should think that every medical observer of experience might readily enough admit, from *à priori* reasoning alone, not to speak of clinical observation, that a life of abstinence from sexual intercourse would be likely to produce grave diseases. Among the lower animals we hear that the males are apt to become rabid when excluded from the females. The disordered emotion of persons of both sexes, who pass lives of voluntary or involuntary celibacy, is a fact of every day observation. Their bad temper, fretfulness, and excitability, are proverbial.

It must not be supposed, however, that unanimity on such an important point as this obtains, at this time, among writers on physiology and practical medicine. Some physiologists, indeed, would seem as if they thought all connection

of the sexes opposed to health and longevity. Dr. Carpenter, who, however, is not a clinical observer, and whose opinion therefore on this subject is not very valuable, says, in his "Manual of Physiology," ed. 1856, p. 503: "It may be stated as a general law, prevailing equally in the vegetable and animal kingdom, that the development of the individual and the reproduction of the species stand in an inverse ratio to one another. We have seen that in many organised beings the death of the parent is necessary to the production of a new generation, and even, in numerous species of insects, it follows very rapidly on sexual intercourse. It is a curious fact that insects, which usually die, the male almost immediately after the act of copulating, the female soon after the deposition of eggs, may be kept alive for many weeks, or even months, by simply preventing it: and there can be no doubt that in the human race early death is by no means an infrequent result of the excessive or premature exercise of the generative organs; and when this does not produce an immediately fatal result, it lays the foundation of future debility, that contributes to produce any form of disease to which there may be a constitutional pre-disposition, especially those of a scrofulous nature." This is merely a confirmation of Bertillon's law with respect to the marriage of *very young* men.

The truth contained in Dr. Carpenter's statement, I presume, is this: that excesses in sex *are* causes of diseases in both sexes, although this seems more true in the case of the male than in the female, as appears from the co-evidence of Parent Duchatelet, Lippert, etc. The error consists in Dr. Carpenter's not seeing that, as Mr. Holmes Coote and Sir Benjamin Brodie both concur in saying, continence causes *far greater* evils, at this time and in this country, than incontinence, as proved by the frequency of hysterical convulsions and erotic mania, so common in our lunatic asylums. I can well enough understand a clerical, a non-medical moralist, ignoring these facts, because he is not in daily contact with the consequences of repressed emotions, and may be biassed by some foregone conclusion, as was M. Comte, who was in favour of indissoluble marriage, and the permanent chastity of widows and widowers (for these, in his system, are not to marry again); but I am at a loss to understand how any medical man, who is accustomed to hospital, dispensary, or private practice, can deny the truth of Mr. Holmes Coote's remarks. Sir B. Brodie only hinted at solitary indulgence,

and other unfortunate aberrations, which are so palpable to those who visit Bethlehem.

Dr. Mayer ("Rapports Conjugaux," p. 177) says that during the ten years, between 16 and 25, it has been found that the mortality is 2·68 per cent. among the religious of different orders and both sexes in France, whilst it is only 1·48 per cent. among the laity. Between 20 and 40 the mortality is 4·40 among the religious orders and 2·74 per cent. among the laity.

Dr. Diday of Lyons also has pointed out the dangers of celibacy in his pamphlet on "Nature et Virginité," Paris, 1851. He there puts the question, "As God has made the accomplishment in a regular manner of the organic functions the condition of life and health, has He not desired that disease and death should be the punishment of those who disobey the injunction by keeping up absolute continence?" He attacks the position of Dr. Duffieux, who defends monasticism, and shows how dangerous to males in general is the practice of celibacy.

It is clear from the writings of various authorities, that there is a difference between puberty and nubility. Mende, in his "Handbuch der Gerichtlichen Medicin," remarks, that by favouring the union of the sexes too early, we risk the exhaustion of the generative faculty in both, and the bringing on of a premature exhaustion. This is found true among the lower animals, and also in man.

With respect to late marriages in women, Riecke, in his work, "Beiträge zur Geburtshulflichen Topographie," says that the proportion of cases in which women in first childbirth require the assistance of art is 1 in 28 among women in general; but 1 in 9 in women of the age of 30 and upwards. Cazeaux is not of this opinion ("Traité de l'Art des Accouchements," 9th ed., p. 286), but, on the contrary, alleges that the age of the woman has not the unfortunate influence on the duration of labour, even when first births occur, that others have said. Madame Lachapelle says ("Pratique des Accouch."): "We often see slow and painful labour in elderly women, who have not as yet borne children; but this is also the case amongst the youngest women. The proportion I dare affirm, is perfectly equal."

There are very few child-births after 45 years of age. Thus, in Wurtemburg, 1 labour out of 66 was noted in women of 45, and only 1 in 5,500 in women of 50 As women thus have a period of fecundity of from 25 to 30 years, and each

pregnancy and lactation lasts 18 months, each woman, if healthy, might bear 16 or 18 children.

From these views of Diday, Lachapelle, and other writers on child-birth and on celibacy, we may conclude that in future discussions of questions of such importance to the happiness of individuals and nations, more use will be made of the statistics now at our disposition in this and other civilised states of Europe. The legislation of wise men must be based upon accurately observed statistical facts, such as those given by Bertillon ; and when this is the case, we shall hear less than we have done of the advantagesof late marriages, and of celibate classes of men and women.

At this moment, even the Catholic Church is still tenaciously devoted to the system of monasticism and female celibacy, so prevalent in the middle ages. I remark that in a meeting of a Catholic society in Edinburgh in the month of October, 1877, the practice of perpetual celibacy of monks and nuns was said to be justified by the teachings of Malthus. Doubtless there is some colour for this assertion, but the quotations I have just made will, I trust, exhibit the weakness of that dictum of the Catholic Church that all should be accursed who allege that marriage is more desirable than chastity.

Mr. Malthus's population check, headed "Vice," comprises prostitution and, what he styles, improper arts made use of by married persons to prevent adding to the number of their children from the fear of poverty. With regard to prostitution, the very numerous writings of the opponents of the Contagious Diseases Acts in England have, of late years, made a large number of persons pretty cognisant of the phenomena attending that melancholy phase of female existence. I have only time here to observe that the sole reason why prostitution exists at all is because the class of women who compose its ranks are almost invariably doomed to sterility. Were this not the case, the number of unfortunate children that would result from the existence of such a class would soon put an end to it. Prostitution, then, is only a check to over-population to the extent that sterility among such women holds good.

To prove the strange fact of the sterility of prostitutes, I may mention that the police administration of Paris had 4,232 persons enrolled on its books as prostitutes in 1854. London has probably some 12,000 prostitutes. Parent Duchatelet says : "Of all the causes of prostitution, especially at Paris, there

is none more frequent than the want of work or poverty, the inevitable effect of insufficient wages. What do our sewing-women or our shirt-makers earn, and, in general, all who occupy themselves with their needle?" And, as to their sterility, he says (ed. 1859, p. 217): "It is generally recognised that prostitutes have no children, or that, if they have, it is in so small a number that they may be regarded as barren. I find from inquiries that 1,000 prostitutes scarcely furnish one birth yearly in Paris." Madame Legrand, chief of the Maternity Hospital at Paris, at the same date when Parent Duchatelet wrote, says:—"There do not enter the Maternity Hospital more than four or six prostitutes a year. Their children rarely live, being still-born."

Persons who speak so severely against the women who form the ranks of what has been well named of late years "Unfortunate women," should ponder well these two remarks of Parent. They will then learn why women accept this sad life, and how it is they can go on with it.

Mr. Malthus's positive checks to population comprehend all unwholesome occupations, severe labour, and exposure to the seasons, extreme poverty, bad nursing of children, great towns, excesses of all kinds, the whole train of disease and epidemics, wars, plague, famine, and infanticide and abortion.

Unwholesome occupations are still very prevalent in this country. Witness, among others, the cutlers and the workers in lead; publicans, who consume their own wares so greatly, and many other trades. Severe labour wears out the lives of a large number of operatives, and disease of the lungs carries off hosts of persons exposed to the seasons before their time. Extreme poverty is the deadliest foe to human existence, and bad nursing of children kills hosts of the young. Large towns are almost without exception more or less unhealthy. Excesses of all kinds are foes to longevity; epidemics carry off thousands; and we are only for the moment free from wars, plagues, and famine in this part of the world.

How important a point in the question of health and longevity the possession of a certain amount of the necessaries and conveniences of existence is may be estimated by remembering that, in France, it has been found by Villermé that persons above the age of 40, if in easy circumstances, die in the proportion of 0·85 per cent., whilst, among the poor, the proportion of deaths at these ages is 1·87 per cent—that is, 2¼ times as great. Villermé also showed that at Paris there

died, from 1817 to 1836, 1 inhabitant in 13 in the 13th Arrondissement, inhabited chiefly by the poor, and 1 in 63 in the 2nd Arrondissement, or rich quarter.

No matter what the form of disease may be, it seems clear that, to use Dr. Heberden's metaphor, "if the average number of marriages and births be given, the average number of deaths will also be given; and the channels through which the great stream of mortality is constantly flowing will always convey off a given quantity. Nature seems always to seize on the weakest part, thus teaching us to make all parts of our social system strong, and to chase vice and misery from the earth."

In a work entitled "Statistics of Families of the Upper and Professional Classes," recently prepared in 1874, for the National Life Assurance Society, by Mr. C. Ansell, jun., we find, from a careful analysis of the facts concerning 48,040 children of the well-to-do classes in England, including members of the legal, clerical, and medical professions, and the nobility, the following details:

Calling his own tables the "Upper Class Tables," Mr. C. Ansell shows that, in extreme infancy—that is, in the first year of life—of 100,000 children born, 8,045 die according to the "Upper Class Table," and 14,949 according to Dr. Farr's "English Life Tables."

It results from various inquiries which have been made on this subject that the figure for children who die in France during the course of the first year is even greater than the general English death-rate, since it is 17·51 per 100, or 17,510 per 100,000. There are on an average some 900,000 births in France yearly, and this gives a mortality annually in that country of 167,000 infants.

The Registrar-General says (Thirty-seventh Annual Report, page xxii.): "The high rate of infant mortality in our large towns is attracting serious attention. It will be seen in the subjoined table that a much larger proportion of infants under one year of age died in some towns than in others. In Liverpool, for instance, out of every 1000 births registered the lamentably large number of 239 perished annually in the five years 1870-4, whereas the proportional number in London was 161, and in Portsmouth 148." This shows that whereas only 8,000 out of 100,000 born among the richer classes die in the first year of life, as many as 24,000 die in the same time among the general population; and of course, perhaps, some 33,000 die in the first year of life among the poorer

classes of Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow. This is in our day one of the most marked of all the positive checks to population.

In France, it seems that in some provinces, Rhone (Devilliers), the mortality is said to be only 5 per cent. in the first year of life, whereas, in certain other departments near Paris, the mortality rises to 75 per cent., and even more. The absurd custom of employing mercenary nurses, so all but universal at Paris, is, of course, the cause of this extravagant and terrible mortality.

In the next period of childhood, from 1 to 5 out of the survivors of the same 100,000 born, 4,684 die among the upper classes, and as many as 11,369 in the general population.

During the remainder of childhood the difference is not so marked; between 5 and 20 the deaths by the "Upper Class Table" are 6,547, against 7,407 among the general public.

Among adults of the upper class, 12,552 die between 20 and 40 years of age, and 14,774 between 40 and 60 years; the corresponding number of these groups of ages, according to the English Life Tables, are 12,417 and 16,876 respectively. In the latter groups of ages the number of deaths, according to the two tables, do not fairly represent the mortality, because of the 100,000 children with which each class started, the proportionate number of survivors exposed to risk at those ages among the upper class so far exceeds that among the general population.

To recapitulate, the annual rate of mortality per 1,000 among infants under 1 year of age appears to be but 80 among the upper classes, against 149 according to the English Life Table; among children, between 1 and 5, the rate is 13 and 35 per 1000 respectively. Between 5 and 20, the rates of mortality are 6 and 7 respectively per 1000; between 20 and 40, 8 and 10 respectively; between 40 and 60, 12 and 18 per 1000.

It is estimated, from the result of this Table, that the mean age of death in the upper classes in a given number born is about 55 years, against 41 years among the general English population. Or, again, it may be said that of 100,000 children born alive among the middle and upper classes, 53,398 survive to the age of 60; whereas, of the same number born in the general population, only 36,983 survive to 60. According to the English Life Table, the average annual rate of mortality among children and adults under 60 is 17·5 per 1000; but

the "Upper Class Table" shows it to be only 10·46 per 1000 among the richer classes.

During the year 1873, there died in England and Wales 368,179 persons between these ages; but, if the rate of mortality had not exceeded the "Upper Class" rate, only 226,040 would have died. Hence, in one year, 142,130 persons died who would have lived had they been more comfortable.

Mr. Alexander Bain, in his remarks on Happiness ("Mental and Moral Science," Appendix, p. 85), has said with truth: "That prime requisite, health, is very imperfectly secured in the lowest grades even of respectable citizenship. The public registers have demonstrated that mortality and disease diminish with every rise in the scale of wealth."

Dr. Mayer ("Rapports Conjugaux," 1874, p. 218) says that about the year 1770, according to Duillard, out of 1000 births, there remained 583 individuals at the age of 5 years, and 502 at 20. From 1817-31 Demontferrand found, in the same number of births, rather less than 720 survivors at 5 years, and 638 at 20. From 1840 to 1859 Dr. Bertillon found that there were, out of 1000 born, 723 survivors at 5 years, and 643 at 20.

Mayer attributes this high mortality to the want of breast-milk and maternal nursing of infants in France, and adds: "We humbly confess that we should prefer to see 800 children born, of whom 750 should live to the age of 5, rather than 1000, of whom only 723 would reach that age, as takes place in our day. If, in conclusion, we recommend prudence and not frauds in the conjugal relationship, at the risk of incurring the anathema of the philanthropists we have alluded to, it is to arrive at that augmentation of the number of survivors, which alone would constitute desirable progress."

Dr. Christison, in a lecture delivered in Edinburgh in 1863, mentions that whilst in Scotland pulmonary consumption accounts for 11·5 per cent. of the total mortality, the mortality in rural districts was only 1·86, and in towns 3·33 per 1000, in 1855.

In Glasgow it was as high as 3·85 per 1000 inhabitants, in 1855. In the country parts of Haddingtonshire the deaths from consumption sink to 1·38 in 1000; and in Berwickshire to 1·04 per 1000 per annum. There is no doubt that many of the trades followed in towns must account for much of this mortality from consumption. Such trades are those of the grinders, stone masons, and cotton operatives, and

those who inhale fine dust, such as coal-whippers and masons; but it is very difficult to account for the vast mass of consumption seen in towns, on such simple principles as that of the employments followed by their inhabitants. Dr. Thouvenin, indeed, in an article on the influence of the various trades upon health, has arrived at the conclusion that, with the exception of cotton-beating, and the dividing and carding of silk cocoons, of white lead, of grinding, and one or two others, industrial pursuits in general do not exercise any directly injurious effects on the health of workmen. That author traces the causes of the deterioration of the health of the working classes of towns, and their greater mortality, to defects in their dwellings, to their hereditary predispositions, to skin diseases, and to venereal and tubercular diseases; to the excess of their premature labour, and the insufficiency and bad quality of their diet; the irregularity of their lives, especially at an age when the development is incomplete; and lastly, to drunkenness. This summary of causes, however, is only another name for poverty, since it has been shown by Dr. D'Espine, in the "Annales d'Hygiène" of 1830, that tubercular disease occasions 68 deaths per 1000 among the richer classes; but more than 230 per 1000 among the poor.

There is nothing obscure in this causation of pulmonary consumption among the poor; for, in the Sixth Report of the Medical Officers of the Privy Council for 1863, Dr. Edward Smith, in an article on the "Food of the Labouring Classes," says that the food of the silk-workers was found to cost only 2s. 2d. a week; that of needlewomen, 2s. 7d.; of kid glovers, 2s. 9d.; shoemakers, 2s. 7½d.; stocking weavers, 2s. 6½d. Dr. Edward Smith sums up by saying: "No class under inquiry exhibited a high degree of health. The least healthy are the kid-glovers, needlewomen, and Spitalfield-weavers. The average quantity of food was too little for health and strength." Of the needlewomen he says: "This is the lowest paid class included in my inquiries. Their ordinary hours of work are from ten to twelve hours. The average income was only 3s. 11¼d. per week." "Nature," says Malthus, "cannot be defeated in her purposes. The necessary mortality must come in some form or other; and the extirpation of one disease will only be the signal for the birth of another, perhaps more fatal."

According to A. Mayer, in his work "Rapports Conjugaux," (Paris, Baillière, 1874, p. 63), among the working-women of factories libertinage is extremely prevalent. Their pay is so

small that, without the assistance which concubinage, procures for them, they would be incapable of maintaining themselves. Their employers and the clerks, who know this well, take advantage of their penury and buy without scruple the favours of the youngest and most beautiful of them. Woe to such as have been treated as step-children by Nature! Their virtue is obliged to take refuge in the haunts where their fellow-workmen of the male sex pollute it at a miserable price. In short, we may say that working-women are forced to become food for prostitution; and this explains the elegance of their Sunday clothes, so little in proportion with their daily earnings.

There are employments where the work-women earned, twenty-five years ago, from 10 to 15 centimes a day; for instance, at Lille, the position of the lace-makers is most deplorable. We may, according to Dr. Thouvenin,* regard it as an incontestable fact that, out of one hundred young female children of from five to six years old, who are taught to make lace, the half will become deformed before the age of fifty.

In some other great manufacturing centres, the wage of the women is from 40 to 75 centimes daily, especially in the branches of spinning and weaving. Parisian industry does not prepare, for the working-woman, a lot more hopeful. There, for a day's wage of 2 francs, the shirtmakers must sew eight shirts in one day; the glover, for 1 franc 80 centimes, must sew six pairs of gloves; the waistcoat-makers, for 1 franc 70 centimes, must prepare six waistcoats or six pairs of trousers daily. M. Jules Simon, who relates these facts in a work entitled "L'Ouvrière," adds that the boot-closer receives 1 franc a pair, and expends 15 centimes for thread and cord.

Dr. Edward Smith also, in a numerous set of questions put by him to 1000 hospital patients affected with consumption, found that the average number of children which the parents of the poor patients had engendered was actually 7·5. No wonder these poor young people became consumptive in such meagrely fed homes. We shall not be astonished after this at the severe tone in which John Stuart Mill writes: "Little advance can be expected in morality until the producing of large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness or any other physical excess."

Infanticide and Abortion.—Although it is possible that the late Dr. Lankester rather exaggerated the number of cases of

* "Ann. d'Hygiène," t. 36, page 32: Paris, 1846.

infanticide occurring in London, it is likely enough that such murders are on the increase. The illustrious Beccaria, in his work ("Des Délits et des Peines," § 36), says: "Infanticide is the inevitable result of the frightful alternative in which the unfortunate woman finds herself placed who has yielded either through weakness or succumbed to violence. On the one side she sees infamy, on the other the death of a being incapable of feeling the loss of life; how should she not prefer the latter part, which shelters her from shame and misery, herself and her unfortunate child?"

But there are other infanticides which are of daily occurrence in large cities. I wish to speak of that kind of death which is caused by culpable negligence of mothers, the want of all care, and even the existence of cruelty, in short, all these acts which considered singly, are incapable of causing death, but which combined so often produce it in London, and our large centres. There can be no doubt in my mind, and I speak from long hospital experience, that mothers with large families among the poorer classes, often desire the death of their infants; and the desire leads but too often to a series of actions which end in the infant's death. The system of "baby-farming," as it was called some years ago in London at the West-end, was but a legal infanticide in many instances; and in the manufacturing districts infanticide is notoriously common.

Firstly, the number of marriages have lately gone on decreasing in this country. Thus the Registrar-General's reports show that, from 1796 to 1805 there were 1716 marriages in 10,000 women; whilst from 1836 to 1845 there were only 1,533. Continental statistics are much like ours in this tale. Thus Sir William Wylde, in his work on Austria, tells us that one out of two births in Vienna is illegitimate; and that in Munich, in 1838, there were actually 270 more illegitimate than legitimate children. In Paris, about one-fourth of all births are illegitimate. In the United States at present, there is a remarkable prevalence of the serious crime of abortion, especially in the Eastern States of the Union, and numerous physicians from that country have informed me that there seems to be a most alarming laxity in the ideas of sanctity attaching to the life of the *fœtus in utero* in those states.

Infanticide was permitted among the majority of the people of antiquity. Among most of the Grecian states, the newly-born infant was laid at its father's feet, until he had decided

as to its lot. This custom was, above all, very much in vogue in Athens. The Romans adopted the customs of the Greeks, and drowned their children, or abandoned them in the public places. In cases of famine and extreme want, the Chinese kill their children, as also do the inhabitants of New Holland, as formerly was the practice in Athens.

"It is," says Mayer, "unfortunately true that abortion and infanticide go on increasing in number, not only in Paris and the other great European capitals, but also in localities of lesser importance." Let us listen on this point to the testimony of Professor Ambroise Tardieu. "It is not only at Paris," he says, "that the crime of abortion is multiplied in a deplorable way. In one session alone, in September, 1856, the Court of Assizes of la Drôme gave judgment in cases where 52 prisoners appeared as authors or accomplices of numerous abortions, committed in some communes adjoining the department. We know that in certain countries abortion is practised in an almost public way, without speaking of the East, where it is, as may be said, a part of the customs. We see it in America, in a great city like New York, form an industry of a notable kind which is not prosecuted, and which has enriched more than one midwife. The figure of infants still-born and born before term, which has increased so considerably there since fifty years, is the proof. Out of a population of 70,770 souls in 1805, there were only 47 still-born infants, whilst in 1849, with a population of 450,000, the number of still-born children had increased to to 1,320." (Ambroise Tardieu, "Etude médico-légale sur l'Avortement," etc., third edition, Paris, 1868.

Ambroise Tardieu, in the same work from which we have already quoted, speaking of infanticide, sums up the actual state of this question: "England in no way is behind Germany or France in this, with regard to the frequency of the crime of infanticide. Taylor gives us, for two years pretty close to each other, the following figures, which leave no doubt on the point. In 1862, of 20,591 inquiries which took place in England and Wales, 3,239 concerned children under one year of age; and of 124 verdicts of wilful murder, more than half referred to infanticides. In 1863, of 22,757 inquiries, 3,664 referred to infants, and among these 166 resulted in verdicts of murder. As in France, the accused persons were, for the most part, in domestic service."

A very eminent medical man, quite recently deceased, Dr. Letheby of London, in a Presidential address to the Medical

Officers of Health Association, remarked, that whenever the birth-rate in any long-peopled country is high, the death-rate is also high. He added that in France, with a birth-rate of only 26·26 per 1000, there is a death-rate of only 23·63 per 1000; whilst Austria, with a birth-rate of 39·86 per 1000, has a death-rate of 30·34. The death-rate of France given by Dr. Letheby is extremely low: it is only 1 death per annum out of 42 persons living. And this occurs in a country where, as we have seen, the waste of infant life is still excessive. It is clear that if France wanted more men for her fields and her factories, she requires at present no more *births*, but merely a greater care of the health of those already born. Why should so many infants be born in England and in France, only to die in the first years of life?

CHAPTER IV.

FURTHER CHECKS TO POPULATION.

THE greatest of all social problems being how to prevent over-rapid procreation, it may be as well to state the proposition again in detail. It appears, then, from the physiological nature of the human female that there are some thirty years of child-bearing possibility in a woman's life, from fifteen to forty-five, during which time any healthy woman may produce from ten to twenty children.

Calculating from this fact, it has been shown that, if a number of individuals such as, for instance, the inhabitants of the British Islands, could be abundantly supplied with food and other necessaries of life, that number might be doubled in some ten or twelve years. (Petty.)

Such a rapid increase as this has, I presume, never been heard of, except, perhaps, in those years which have succeeded great plagues, such as the *Black Death* in the Middle Ages, or after some gigantic Indian famine. The lamentable famines which take place almost annually in some part of our Indian Empire are fully accounted for on the theory of Malthus, when we read in the "Institutes of Narada," translated by Dr. Julius Jolly of the University of Wurtzburg (Trübner, 1876), page 83, the following: "Section 25. No girl should let the period of her maturity come on without giving notice

to her relations. If these, *thereupon*, do not give her in marriage to a husband, they are similar to murderers of embryos." The consequence of this mistaken theological doctrine of the Hindoo Faith is that young girls become mothers at the age of eleven or twelve, and poverty and death are plentiful in all parts of that over-peopled land. Lord Derby alone of all our statesmen seems to be thoroughly alive to the cause of the ever-recurring Indian Famines. It has, indeed, been our privilege in the nineteenth century to witness the rapidity with which members of our race, quite like ourselves in every other respect, save in capabilities of obtaining food, can increase and multiply when transferred to fertile lands hitherto almost uninhabited. The United States of America gave the first salient example of the law of human increase dimly seen by Plato and Aristotle, but first of all clearly enunciated and worked out by the Englishman, Malthus; and our colonies in Australia and elsewhere are every day showing us more clearly the immense latent force of multiplication inherent in the human race.

Mr. Darwin and other writers on natural history have generalised the grand induction of Malthus: so that, I presume, there are but few intelligent persons in this nation who have not realised, when they have thought the matter over for some time, the immense influence exerted by the so-called *struggle for existence* on the fauna of this planet, a part of which we are. Human society is evidently only one exemplification of that constant fight for existence which causes the death of the weak, and the survival of the strongest, as has been abundantly explained of late by Mr. Darwin, Mr. H. Spencer, and by numerous other writers on natural history and the theory of society.

Statistics now furnish us with nine official censuses of the United States between the years 1790 and 1870. In 1790, the United States were free and constituted as they now are. According to the different official censuses, the progress of population has been, in round numbers, in 1790, 3,929,000; in 1800, 5,305,000; in 1810, 7,239,000; in 1820, 9,638,000; in 1830, 12,866,000; in 1840, 17,062,000; in 1850, 22,806,000; in 1860, 31,399,000; and in 1870, 38,558,371. In 1880 it will probably be some 52,000,000.

If we divide the cypher of 1840 by that of 1790; or 17 millions by 3·9 millions, we find that the population more than quadrupled in fifty years.

If we divide the cypher for 1850 (22·8 millions) by that

of 1800 (5·3 millions), we find that the population has increased four times in the two first twenty-five years of this century.

If we compare periods of twenty years alone we see that the population nearly doubled from 1800 to 1820; from 1810 to 1830; from 1820 to 1840; from 1830 to 1850; and from 1840 to 1860.

When we make a comparison for periods of ten years, from census to census, we see that the population has increased 35 per cent. in 1800; 36 per cent. in 1810; 33½ per cent. in 1820; 33½ per cent. in 1830; 32½ in 1840: and 34 per cent. in 1850.

It has been said, and will be said again and again, that immigration has been a chief cause of the rapid increase of the population in the United States; and it will be argued in this way, that the cyphers I have stated furnish no clear evidence of the possibility of the very rapid power of doubling that is given by scientific men as an appanage of our race, when in favourable circumstances, with respect to food, etc.

But it has been pointed out, that from 1793 until 1815, Europe furnished very few immigrants to the United States. Thus, Adam Seybert of Philadelphia, in 1818, mentions that in 1794, only 10,000 immigrants arrived in the States, and, in 1804, it was estimated that not more than 4,000 immigrants had arrived annually for some years. Seybert adds that, from 1790 to 1810, 8,000 was the maximum of immigrants who settled in the States. From this and other facts adduced by writers of eminence, I presume that any unprejudiced person will readily admit that the inhabitants of the United States have, on several occasions, doubled their numbers, quite independently of any aid from immigration, in periods considerably less than thirty years.

According to the "Statesman's Year Book," of 1875, page 583, the United States acquired their actual power and greatness mainly through immigration. The writer, however, admits that from 1775 to 1815 immigration into the country was very small, on account of the American Revolution and the European wars; not more than 3,000 or 4,000 a year arriving in the United States during that period. This proves Mr. Malthus' statement.

When peace between England and America was re-established in 1815, immigration took a fresh start. The famine of 1816 and 1817 gave the first powerful impulse to a larger immigration from Germany; and after the year 1820

a never-interrupted stream kept flowing into the United States. Thus, in the ten years previous to December 31, 1830, the States received 151,824 immigrants; in the years between 1830 and 1840, 559,125; in the years between 1840 and 1850, 1,713,251; in the years between 1850 and 1860, 2,598,216; and in the ten years previous to 1870, 4,491,451. Thus between 1820 and 1870 rather more than nine millions and a half of immigrants entered the United States.

According to a table in page 30 (edition 1869) of M. Maurice Block's well-known work, "L'Europe Politique et Sociale," the annual rate of increase in Russia is 1·02; in Germany, 1·12; in France, 0·44; in Austria, with Venice 1·60; in Great Britain, 1·31; in Spain, 1·62; in Belgium, 1·44; in Sweden, 1·20; in Switzerland, 0·64; in Holland, 0·90; in Norway, 1·84. M. Block adds, that, according to this rate of increase, the population would double in 38 years in Norway; in 42 in Prussia; in 52 in Great Britain; in 66 in Russia; in 160 in France; and in 194 in Austria without Venice.

All these rates of doubling are vastly slower than the rates noticed in the United States and also in our new Colonies in Australasia; which, comprehending New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia, has already a population of above two millions of our branch of the human race. Considering the fact that Australia was only discovered in 1770, by Captain Cook, and its great distance from the mother country, such colonisation exhibits, in a strong light, the rapidity of increase insisted on by Darwin in a passage to be cited. "The power of increase," says Mr. J. S. Mill, "of the human species is indefinite; and the actual multiplication would be extraordinarily rapid, if the power were exercised to the utmost. It never is exercised to the utmost; and yet, in the most favourable circumstances known to exist, which are those of a fertile region colonised from an industrious and civilised community, population has continued for several generations, independently of fresh emigration, to double itself, in not much more than twenty years. . . . It is a very low estimate of the capacity of increase, if we only assume that, in a good sanitary condition of the people, each generation may be double the number of the generation which preceded it." He also remarks that "the power of multiplication inherent in all organic life, may be regarded as infinite. There is no species of vegetable or animal which, if the earth were

entirely abandoned to it, and to the things on which it feeds, would not, in a small number of years, overspread every region of the globe of which the climate was compatible with its existence."

Mr. Charles Darwin, in his great work on the "Origin of Species," shows that his mind is pervaded by the Malthusian theory of population. He thus writes :—"There is no exception to the rule that every organic being naturally increases at so high a rate that, if not destroyed, the earth would soon be covered with the progeny of a single pair. Even slow-breeding man has doubled in twenty-five years ; and at this rate, in a few thousand years, there would literally not be standing-room for his progeny. Linnæus has calculated that if an annual plant produced only two seeds—and there is no plant so unproductive as this—and their seedlings next year produced two, and so on, then, in twenty years there would be a million plants. The elephant is reckoned the slowest breeder of all known animals : and I have taken some pains to estimate its probable minimum rate of natural increase ; it will be under the mark to assume that it breeds when thirty years old, and goes on breeding till ninety years old, bringing forth three pair of young in this interval. If this be so, at the end of the fifth century there would be fifteen million elephants descended from the first pair. But we have better evidence on this subject than mere theoretical calculations, namely, the numerous recorded cases of the astonishingly rapid increase of various animals in a state of nature, when circumstances have been favourable to them during two or three following seasons. Still more striking is the evidence from our domestic animals of many kinds which have run wild in many parts of the world ; if the statements of the rate of increase of slow-breeding cattle and horses in South America, and latterly in Australia, had not been well authenticated, they would have been incredible. So it is with plants : cases could be given of introduced plants which have become common throughout whole islands in a period of less than ten years. Several of the plants, such as the cardoon and a tall thistle, now most numerous over the wild plains of La Plata, clothing square leagues of surface almost to the exclusion of all other plants, have been introduced from Europe ; and there are plants which now range in India, as I hear from Dr. Falconer, from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas, which have been imported from America since its discovery. In such cases, and endless instances could be given, no one supposes that the fertility of these

animals or plants has been suddenly and temporarily increased in any sensible degree. The obvious explanation is that the conditions of life have been very favourable, and that there has consequently been less destruction of the old and young, and that nearly all the young have been enabled to breed. In such cases, the geometrical rate of increase, the result of which never fails to be surprising, simply explains the extraordinarily rapid increase and wide diffusion of naturalised productions in their new homes. In a state of nature, almost every plant produces seed, and among animals there are very few that do not annually pair. Hence, we may confidently assert, that all plants and animals are tending to increase at a geometrical ratio; that all would most rapidly stock every station in which they could anyhow exist, *and that the geometrical tendency* to increase must be checked by destruction at some period of life."

Mr. Darwin's theory has been so widely accepted as the only good account of the way in which man and the other species of animals have appeared on the face of this planet, that few will be found, at present, ready to contradict his view. I would only add, that Darwinianism is merely a scientific theory, and that it is by no means adequate to the solutions of problems in social life.

I have shown that Mr. Malthus' plan for restraining the increase of mankind within the necessary limits of happiness consisted in recommending late, very late, marriages. Indeed, it is pretty clear that he trusted mainly to this plan, because he classes in the category of *vice*, those so-called "improper arts," for the avoidance of increase of families resorted to by married persons.

I cannot in any way share the idea that care for the over-rapid increase of the race is solely to be expected from bachelors, spinsters, or the widowed. It seems to me that in the near future the idea that we ought to be the arbiters of our own destiny, in regard to the numbers of our offspring, is destined to become a popular notion in all really civilised countries; and that rational selection and prudence will preside in future over the procreation of offspring.

It is rather strange that the theological school and the experientialists seem to have, as we may say, changed their parts in this grand question. The first school, in the person of the Catholic priest, thunders against prudence in marriage; the second, exalting the moral part of man, recommends the empire of reason over his appetites.

Thus M. Charles Dunoyer, when Prefect of Amiens, made an observation which was vehemently criticised by the Catholic clergy of his diocese: to the effect that, "Those classes of society most to be pitied can only attain to freedom from their sorrowful state by means of activity, reason, and prudence; prudence, above all, in the conjugal union, and by taking the greatest care to avoid rendering their marriage more prolific than their industry."*

Catholic writers, partizans of the morality of the "casuists," conclude either for continued abstinence, with the perpetual celibacy of a part of the human species; or, on the other hand, as to the duty of an incessant procreation among those who marry.

To this it has been responded by M. Ch. Dunoyer,* "It is incredible that the action which calls mankind into being, that of all human actions which brings the most important consequences with it, should be precisely that which has been worst regulated by the Church. The fashion, it is true, of the civil act and sacrament have been prescribed; but, once contracted, it has been deemed right to leave the consequences of the marriage alone. The sole rule that has been prescribed has been that it is necessary either to abstain from all approaches, or to omit nothing which might render the union fertile. So long as the couple can believe that they are not performing *a vain act*, the morale of the casuists has no reproach for them; whether they be careless of themselves or abuse each other; or, above all, dispense with thinking of the third and absent one they are about to call into life, without troubling themselves with the lot which awaits it. All this is of little matter: the essential is not that they should abstain from a triply hurtful act, but that they should avoid *a vain act.*

"Thus the truth, in spite of these grave follies, is that if parents need not consider as blamable all connection which might not tend to increase their posterity, they have nevertheless, even in the best authorised connections, and in the bosom of the most legitimate union, to take care, whether of themselves, or one of the other, or both one and the other, above all concerning the third persons who may be the fruit of their union. It is needless to add that marriage does not free from all regulation that of all things in the world which should be the most regulated—the movement of births and

* "Du Principe de Population," par Joseph Garnier. Paris, Garnier Frères, 1857, p. 92.

† *Ibid.* Paris.

of population. Marriage, doubtless, has for its aim the increase of the species—but that means its judicious increase, its increase proportionate to the means on which the species is to live. Is it, I ask, to obey the precepts of holy writ, to multiply the number of the unfortunate? Is it to increase the species to procreate myriads of beings destined to a speedy and inevitable destruction? Parents are unpardonable who, before calling children into life, do not take the trouble to examine if they are about to call them into a happy or a miserable existence."

This is what comes of the morality of the Roman Catholic *casuists*, as compared with that of the scientific school known in modern times by the name rendered popular by Mr. J. S. Mill, the "Utilitarians." Vain acts to the Utilitarian are but of little importance. The object of his warning is against hurtful actions, or those which tend to lessen human happiness.

It seems clear to me that if there is one thing more than any other that is likely to lessen, and perhaps break up, the power of the Roman Catholic Church ere long, it will be the advice it used to give, and perhaps still gives in all countries but France, to penitents on this matter. In works on the duties of Catholic priests who are confessors, such as that entitled "Mœchiologie," by Doctor Debreyne, of Paris, the confessor is told to inform his penitents that all "conjugal prudence," such as is habitually practised by married couples in France, is "the most damnable of mortal sins."

In a letter from Doctor Bertillon to M. Marchal de Calvi in 1867 ("Rapports Conjugaux," 1874, p. 220), that able French Malthusian writes: "After having gradually developed his intellect, and arriving at self-knowledge, man has commenced to react against fate; and whilst the unfortunate classes and slaves have continued, like the lower animals, to impose no rule over their fecundity, and have gained the name of *proletaires* (makers of children), the wiser and better (*aristoi*) will only accept the pains of labour and the burden of paternity, in proportion and according to the estimate of their powers. They have deprived fate of the care of regulating what it only regulates by pain and death; and were Jehovah to crush me with His lightning, and the casuists by their decrees, I cannot consent to see in this any crime or any fault, but, on the contrary, a victory of our will over fate."

In the article on marriage, already alluded to, Dr. Bertillon says:

"Here there comes the thorny question of constraint, *moral* or *immoral*, which has for its object the not making of children but in good earnest; that is a delicate proposition, which excites the susceptibility of many persons, especially if human sensuality, here, as in the case of many others of its pleasures, thinks of plucking the flowers without the fruits. It may be argued that it is incomprehensible that man who looks upon it as wisdom and as duty not to act except after having duly reflected, after willing, and prevision of the consequences of all his actions, and who repudiates in all matters an unreflecting abandonment of himself to the instinctive movements of passion, should abandon this rule of conduct which he holds as sensible, when he performs the most important act he is called upon to perform: namely, the procreation of a human being, an act the consequences of which he will have to support during the whole of his life. I know very well that there are some persons who, trusting in God in all things, do not make any difficulty of such matters as these, but sing with the poet:

"'Aux petits des oiseaux, il donne la pâture.
Et sa bonté s'étend sur toute la nature.'

(To the young birds He giveth their meat; and His goodness extends over all nature.)

"But it does not seem, in the way that things stand at present, that either (French) townspeople or peasants are of a humour to listen to this tale; they see well enough little birds and little children dying of hunger, cold, and misery, when the father and mother are wanting, or when exhausted they are not capable of sustaining them; and in spite of sermons they practise constraint . . . . But what restraint? There are some persons who, facing without shame the mysteries of the nuptial couch, boldly raise the veil! We do not think it useful to ask for the same license; we would willingly have left the subject alone at this point, if physicians, too much inclined to replace missing facts by their conjectures, had not advanced the view that hygiene was greatly interested in the *modus faciendi* of married people; and that its duty was to raise its voice against that practice which had already drawn down on it the wrath of Jehovah. (Genesis xxxviii.)

"In our time it is M. Al. Mayer and M. Devay, not to speak of any but doctors, who have seized the avenging lightning, and it is against the woman that they throw it; they menace her with the whole *cortége* of uterine diseases; they know,

without doubt, that it is to this practice that the frequency of cancer of the uterine neck is due, and of many other affections. If you ask on what these physicians rest such extraordinary assertions, they will cite some observations they alone have seen (and who is there who could not cite such-like in this point, and to prove any conclusion?); then, feeling the nullity of the facts they bring forward, they exclaim, 'Who can prove us wrong?'

"We conclude that, when assertions so grave as these rest exclusively on a logic of this kind, there is nothing to be done but to pass on. It seems to me that for us physicians who are hygienists, in all these delicate questions, our part and sole function is, first of all, to say what is true science; and again I admit the consequences and inductions which follow in all probability from our positive knowledge; but that to menace with hobgoblins him who, according to us, is merely, perhaps, wanting in good taste or in delicacy, is none of our affair; let married people decide for themselves on this point."

I cannot but heartily agree with every word of this.

There is a report, as I have hinted, that, since the year 1870, on account of representations made to the Vatican Council of Rome, that Council has seen fit to rescind the command to French confessors which I have alluded to in a former page. How far this may be true I have at present no means of ascertaining, since such matters are more or less kept in doubt, and merely spoken of in the bosom of the Church.

Dr. Mayer ("Rapports Conjugaux," 1874, p. 209) alleges that, from conversations with many ecclesiastics, he has found their unanimous response, with regard to *moral restraint* after marriage to be, that the morality, which is common to all religions, wishes that men should only bring into the world beings likely to be happy.

Dr. Debreyne observes that pulmonary consumption, which always makes such rapid progress in marriage, and the more so since the persons attacked are often impelled by erotic passions, is very certainly communicable to the other partner, if the younger of the two, and if he has the slightest predisposition to it. Besides, this terrible and common disease transmits itself with even greater probability to the offspring. "We do not speak," he continues, "of essential or nervous epilepsy, which connection almost always exasperates, and which the other partner, especially the wife, may also contract, by a sort of nervous contagion or automatic

imitation. We shall say nothing, again, of gravel and inveterate scrofula, which is generally hereditary; which often causes the degeneration of families or races; and which is inevitable if both partners are scrofulous. A prudent and wise legislation ought to take these data into consideration and provide for them. Would there not be as much utility in doing this, as in considering certain degrees of relationship?"

Lugol, who wrote his work on scrofula, after thirty years practice in the great Parisian hospital of Saint Louis, says that families that intermarry become quickly scrofulous for want of crossing of the races. The question whether marriages of consanguinity are dangerous or not, is vehemently debated at this time. On the one hand, the Jews, who marry their very near relatives very generally, have maintained a high degree of vitality for ages; and it is alleged by Bertillon and others that it is only when the husband and wife are both of a delicate stock, that the danger of such marriages exists. The main point we now see clearly is, that forethought should regulate the quality as well as the quantity of children brought into any civilised community. "Where then," asks Debreyne, "would be the wonder if the law, which at present, in France, requires the consent of the parents, should also require the consent of a physician, who should show that there was physical fitness before the marriage was permitted by law?"

Listen, on this matter, to Mr. J. S. Mill, who, in Book II., chap. xiii. § 1, of his work on "Political Economy," says:

"One cannot wonder that silence on this great department of human duty should produce unconsciousness of moral obligations, when it produces oblivion of physical facts. That it is possible to delay marriage, and to live in abstinence, when unmarried, most people are willing to allow; but when persons are once married, the idea, in this country, never seems to enter any one's mind that having or not having a family, or the number of which it shall consist, is amenable to their own control. One would imagine that children were rained down upon married people direct from heaven, without their having either art or part in the matter; that it was really, as the common phrase has it, God's will, and not their own, which decided the number of their offspring."

"When dangerous prejudices," says Sismondi, "have not become accredited, when a morality contrary to our true duties towards others, and especially towards those to whom we have given life, is not inculcated in the name of the most

sacred authority, no prudent man contracts matrimony before he is in a condition which gives him an assured means of living, and no married man has a greater number of children than he can properly bring up. The head of a family thinks with reason, that his children may be contented with the condition in which he himself has lived; and his desire will be that the rising generation should represent exactly the departing one; that one son and daughter arrived at the marriageable age should replace his own father and mother; that the children of his children should, in their turn, replace himself and his wife; that his daughter should find in another family the precise equivalent of the lot which will be given in his own family to the daughter of another; and that the income which sufficed for the parents, will suffice for the children. Whenever this family has been formed, justice and humanity require that he should impose on himself the same restraint which is submitted to by the unmarried. When we consider how small, in every country, is the number of natural children, we must admit that this restraint is, on the whole, sufficiently effectual. In a country where population has no room to increase, or in which its progress must be so slow as to be hardly perceptible, when there are no places vacant for new establishments, a father who has eight children must expect, either that six of them will die in childhood, or that three men and three women among his contemporaries, and in the next generation three of his sons and three of his daughters will remain unmarried on his account."

Mr. Mill points out again and again, the evils which arise from the present prejudices of the poorer classes in favour of rapid reproduction; but whilst he laments them, he has a steadfast hope that they can be removed. Thus in Book II., chap. xiii., § 2, he says:

"But let us try to imagine what would happen if the idea became general among the labouring classes, that the competition of too great numbers was the principal cause of their poverty; so that every labourer looked (with Sismondi) upon every other who had more than the number of children which the circumstances of society allowed to each, as doing him a wrong, as filling up the place which he was entitled to share. Any one who supposes that this state of opinion would not have a great effect on conduct must be profoundly ignorant of human nature, can never have considered how large a proportion of the motives which induce the generality of men to take care even of their own interests, is derived from regard

to opinion—from the expectation of being disliked or despised for not doing it. In the particular case in question it is not too much to say that over-indulgence is as much caused by the stimulus of opinion as by the mere animal propensity; since opinion universally, and especially amongst the most uneducated classes, has connected ideas of spirit and power with the strength of the instinct, and of inferiority with its moderation or absence; a perversion of sentiment caused by its being the means and the stamp of a dominion exercised over other human beings. The effect would be great of merely removing this factitious stimulus; and when once opinion shall have turned itself into an adverse direction, a revolution will soon take place in this department of human conduct."

At present almost all persons in society share the prejudices of the working classes in favour of large families. Thus (Book II. chap. xiii. § 2) Mr. Mill says:

"It is a fact that even Boards of Guardians, who are supposed to be official apostles of anti-population doctrines, will seldom hear patiently of anything which they are pleased to denominate as Malthusianism. Boards of Guardians in rural districts principally consist of farmers; and farmers, it is well known, in general dislike even allotments, as making the labourers 'too independent.' From the gentry, who are in less immediate contact and collision of interest with the labourers, better things might be expected, and the gentry of England are usually charitable. But charitable people have human infirmities, and would very often be secretly not a little dissatisfied if no one needed their charity; it is from them one oftenest hears the base doctrine, that God has decreed there shall always be poor. When one adds to this, that nearly every person who has had in him any spring of exertion for a social object has had some favourite reform to effect, which he thought the admission of this great principle would throw into the shade, has had corn laws to repeal or taxation to reduce, or small notes to issue, or the Charter to carry, or the Church to revive or abolish, or the aristocracy to pull down, and looked upon any one as an enemy who thought anything important except his object; it is scarcely wonderful that since the population doctrine was first promulgated, nine-tenths of the talk has always been against it, and the remaining tenth only audible at intervals: and that it has not yet penetrated far among those who might be expected to be the least willing recipients of it—the labourers themselves."

CHAPTER V.

ON EMIGRATION AND VOLUNTARY REPRODUCTION.

MANY persons speak of emigration as a remedy which makes all care as to the size of families unnecessary. Such persons insist on the importance of colonising new countries with civilised persons, and use other similar arguments.

To this it may be replied that emigration has been quite unparalleled in extent during this century, and yet that it has left many European countries, such as ours, full of destitute persons; that now Americans can surely people the United States rapidly enough without any help from Europe; and lastly, the great argument of Chalmers, that it is only the miserable that will emigrate, as a rule; and hence an extensive emigration is a clear proof of great destitution, besides being a provocative to over-population, by presenting a *supposed* cure for the evils of imprudence in marriage, which proves on trial to be illusory. We therefore may conclude that, in addition to hard work and good conduct, every adult should add prudence with regard to not rendering the family more numerous than the funds at its disposal will comfortably bring up.

The population of France, although nominally a Catholic country, and amenable to the casuistry of the Roman Catholic Church, has lately been almost stationary, as disclosed by the accurate statistics of births and deaths taken from 1854 to 1868. In 1854 there were 923,461 births and 992,779 deaths; in 1868, 984,140 births and 922,038 deaths in France.

Families, as a rule, are very small in France. In 1801 there was 1 birth to every 30 inhabitants; in 1841, 1 in 35; in 1855, 1 in 40 inhabitants; whilst the population was kept stationary mainly because adult life became longer, and not from the accession of new members, as it is in Holland, Belgium, or Germany. The average of life inrural France was in 1854 very high, and only 1 in 41 of the population died annually; since then, only 1 in 42 (Letheby).

The fecundity of marriage in France has much fallen off during this century; and whilst 4·50 is the average family to a marriage in England, France has little over 3 as the average family (Hermann Merivale).

M. Maurice Block ("Mrs. Grote's Collected Papers." Lond.,

1862, p. 79) gives the following conclusive reason for this phenomenon. When speaking of the town artisans of France he says that, "Once married, many of them are careful to have no more offspring than can be competently provided for, and fairly endowed at the death of their parents. This habit is likewise adopted in a great number of rural districts. It is affirmed, indeed, that in several of our departments, the peasantry habitually limit their families to two children; and since all of these even do not reach a marriageable age, an absolute diminution of our numbers would take place, if it were not that some couples are to be found, who, relying on Providence, and on their own industrious habits, bring into the world a larger number than the generality. If France does not possess more numerous colonies, it is because children do not swarm with us as they do in England; and that consequently we possess not the amount of over-population requisite to set up fresh communities."

Doubtless, there is much truth in this observation of M. Block, that one great reason why the French do not gain colonies nowadays is because families are so small, both among the townsmen and countrymen in France. But, let us remember, that emigration of Germans, Irish, and British people, has almost always been caused by their extreme indigence at home; and we may, perhaps, begin to envy the French small-family system, if it permit the poorer classes of that country to get a living in their native land.

Listen to the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, who was more than a divine, for he was a most excellent writer on the science of Political Economy. In his work on "Political Economy," ed. 1856, he says:

"The felt necessity for emigration from a country is, in itself, a practical evidence that its resources are not illimitable. We may rest assured that, if other remedies were at hand for the destitution of the people, they would have the preference over this. Could colonisation, or the invention of new employments, or the increase of capital, or the opening of foreign trade, have furnished adequate and withal indefinite resources for our population, we should never have witnessed, to any great extent, among them a disposition to renounce the scenes of their infancy, with all the charms and associations of home, for the chances and perils of distant and unknown lands."

I quite agree with Dr. Chalmers in this, and cannot appreciate so much as my neighbours the great desire of

people to cross the ocean, in order to attain a happiness which should be indigenous in all civilised states. France, indeed, has but few emigrants, as compared with England and Germany, for, in 1853, only 9,694 persons emigrated from France; and in the next four years, an average of 18,000 emigrate yearly, making the annual emigration from France only about one person out of forty thousand inhabitants.

Whereas, if we turn to Germany, and the United Kin dom of Great Britain and Ireland, we find no less an emig ation from our own country, from 1815 to 1871, than some 6,674,000, 2,750,000 of whom left between 1847 and 1857, starved out by the dire famine in Ireland. Germany, too, is most prolific; and very fond of emigration. She sent out 1,200,000 persons, chiefly to the United States, from 1850 to 1860.

Both of these great tides of emigration have contributed, doubtless, not a little to the sufferings of the older States of the Union, such as Massachusetts and New York; and have caused, I doubt not, the cultivated natives of these Eastern States to have recourse to the criminal and dangerous practices of abortion, to avoid their being driven farther west by the poverty-stricken Irish, British, and Germans who have landed on these shores. The Eastern shores of America are now over-peopled.

I have often admired a vigorous sentence in "Mrs. Grote's Collected Papers," where she speaks of M. Block's statistics and his lamentation over the non-capacity of the French for colonisation. She says: "Few persons can, I think, fail to perceive, in the almost ludicrous lamentations of M. Block, the source of difference in the condition of the French people, taken as a whole, and the English. Those to whose imagination the ideas of boundless wealth carry unmixed delight and pride, will deem the English form of existence the preferable one. But persons of really philanthropic turn of mind will probably regard the prudent independent habits of the French peasant with approving sympathy. Nay, they may even come to regard the advantage of setting up distant colonies as dearly purchased by the painful sacrifice involved in a system of inconsiderate, improvident, multiplication of families, necessitating, as a last resource against famine, an expatriation from country, conjoined with, possibly, a life-long separation from home and friends."

Dr. Lombard, of Geneva, observed at the Congrès Médical International, held at Lyons in 1872, that, "The French are

at the bottom of the scale with regard to the fecundity of marriages, which is the chief cause of the slow increase of France. But, when we regard the active population of citizens able to gain their own living, then the superiority of France is seen. There is no nation where life is better employed or more spared; in a word, where there are fewer losses. And what is the consequence? France is superior to most countries in arts and industry, and in the division of wealth."

Lord Derby, in a letter in the *Standard*, of 1873, states that a great contractor had noticed to him that the French nation was the richest in Europe; and, when we consider that France has the smallest proportion of non-working classes of any nation in Europe, we can understand this. Thus, France has, out of 100,000 persons alive, no less than 14,700 between thirty and forty years of age, whilst England has only 12,182; France has 12,190 per 100,000 inhabitants between forty and fifty, England only 9,629; and, between fifty and sixty years of age, the proportional number of France is 9·62, and England, 6·426. In the "Statesman's Year Book" for 1875, p. 241, *et seq.*, I find that the Registrar-General of England states that the population of the United Kingdom is increasing at the rate of 1,173 a day. Emigration is said to take away about 468 of that number, leaving 705 a day to swell the population at home. In 1873, England and Wales alone, with a population of 23,356,414, had no less than 831,809 births and 205,460 marriages. France that year, with a population of more than 36,000,000, had only 826,121 births in 1873. No wonder that we have nearly one million of paupers in many years, besides a perfect host of persons on the verge of pauperism.

I have before alluded to the remarkable fact that all this goes on in France, a country nominally Catholic. This is a noteworthy fact. Now, I quite agree with M. Joseph Garnier, that it were much to be desired that the study of Political Economy should form part of the curriculum of the higher clergy of the Romish Church, who lay down the morals to guide the inferior priests; for these are put completely under their orders. We have already seen that the Roman Catholic Church in France formerly stigmatised the "conjugal prudence" of French parents as the "most damnable of mortal sins," and insisted that the confessors should refuse absolution to such parents as listened to the dictates of prudence in regard to limiting the number of their children.

Theologians, however, are occasionally unable to overcome their kindlier natures, and to refuse the teachings of science and experience. This casuistry of the Romish Church has been lately boldly called in question by a French priest, in a communication addressed to the Œcumenical Council which sat at Rome in 1870. (*Documenta ad illustrandum Concilium Vaticanum, Anni* 1870. Gesammelt und herausgegeben von Joh. Friederich, Prof. der Theologie in München, p. 289).

The author of this work reviews therein all the objections, twenty in number, which ecclesiastical authorities have directed against French "conjugal prudence," and gives at length, in a specific reply to each, his reasons for thinking that this prudence has become indispensable, inevitable, and therefore venial; and he prays the holy mother Church, by a formal decree of Council, not to cause the damnation of so many millions of souls, by permitting their clerical directors to impose upon them prescriptions and prohibitions which are impossible to be observed. "It is not the sin," says our author, "which is new, but the circumstances which have changed. This practice (*i.e.*, of *conjugal prudence* and voluntary production of small families in France) has been spreading more and more for half a century from the force of things. As Providence does not multiply animals when they have not wherewithal to eat, so it will not require reasonable man voluntarily to multiply when there is no longer the condition for his subsistence. This is human calculation, pecuniary motives if you will; but a calculation as inevitable as destiny. Countries enjoying the faith do not thus calculate, it is true, and so long as obedience is possible, they will obey the priest without a murmur; but a day will come when the prevailing doctrine will be applicable to them all; and hence we earnestly plead for reform. *Other times, other customs*, the laws should change with the customs."

If the inhabitants of Boston, Chicago, New York, and the rest of the cultivated classes in the States would only do as the French people, I should have had no word of dispraise of their conduct, although I should think a law for the exclusion of immigrants from the Eastern States might perhaps prevent the necessity for so much conjugal prudence as is required in an old country like France or ours.

How often have we not heard the slow increase of the French considered as the cause why the last Franco-German war took place, and ended so disastrously for them.

In the *Saturday Review* of April 21st, 1877, there is an

article on "Population and Wealth in France," the review of a paper written by Dr. Bertillon in the *Revue Scientifique* of 1877. In this communication Bertillon shows that at the present moment in France, out of every 1000 inhabitants, there are between 26 and 27 births; whereas in England the ratio is 35, and in Germany from 38 to 40. That is to say, there are 12 or 13 more births in Germany than in France for every thousand persons living; or, in equal populations, nearly three children are born in Germany to two in France. The birth-rate in France has steadily decreased since the beginning of the century, from 33 per 1000 inhabitants, about the present English rate, to 26.3 per 1000.

The cause of this, says Bertillon, is not the paucity of married women between the ages of 15 and 50. In every thousand inhabitants, indeed, there are in France 140 married women between 15 and 50, whilst there are only 133 in this country, and no more than 128 in Prussia. Hence the birth-rate ought to be highest inFrance. This gives further proof of the infecundity of French marriages. Germany, too, is a far poorer country than France, yet the excess of births and deaths is far greater in Germany than in France; and the birth-rate in France has decreased as its prosperity has increased.

Except among barbarous and semi-civilised peoples, it is not the bare necessaries of life, the amount of food, clothing, and house accommodation which, for example, would satisfy a slave, that determine the rate of growth, but the popular standard for the time being, or what is required to make life endurable. If that standard rise faster than wealth, the increase of population will be slow; if it rise less rapidly, the increase will be quick. It is hardly necessary to dwell upon this point, for it is a truism to say that when people have once come to regard certain comforts as necessaries, they will not willingly descend to a more wretched existence. Partly because of the general diffusion of well-being consequent on the Revolution, the facility with which landed property can be acquired, and the universal desire to obtain it; partly because of the strong hold which the idea of equality has upon Frenchmen, and their unwillingness to see their children descend in the social scale; and partly because of their attachment to their native soil, and the repugnance they find to emigration, French peasants have a high standard of living, and they refuse to risk their own or their children's future by encumbering themselves with large families.

In the thirty departments having the largest number of proprietors, Bertillon finds that for every thousand inhabit-

ants there are 285 proprietors, 24·7 births, 32·2 deaths, and 25·3 marriages. In thirty-one departments, with a medium number of proprietors, there are 240 proprietors, 25 to 27 births, 23·1 deaths, and 25·6 marriages. And in twenty-one departments having the least number of proprietors, there are 177 proprietors, 28·1 births, 32·2 deaths, and 25·9 marriages. It will be noted how sensibly the ratio of births rises as the ratio of proprietors falls, while the ratio of deaths and marriages varies only by small fractions.

With regard to the economic consequence of this slow rate of increase, Bertillon says that Germany has forty millions of people or thereabouts; and its birth-rate is 40 per thousand inhabitants; *i.e.*, it has 1,600,000 births per annum. If Germany had the French birth-rate, the births would only be 1,040,000. Hence Germany has an excess of 560,000 births every year over the French population; and this, according to the tables of mortality, gives 350,000 adults of twenty years of age. Now, a man during the earliest years of his life has to be supported at the expense of others—to be fed, clothed, and taught, and these 350,000 young people have to be maintained by their parents—that is, by the generation which precedes them. M. Bertillon estimates that the maintenance of each of these costs four thousand francs—£160. Consequently, Germany has to expend £56,000,000 every year on the increase of her population beyond what she would have to lay out were her birth-rate the same as the French. On the other hand, with the German birth-rate, France would have half a million more births than now; and, in consequence, would have to expend £49,000,000 which she now saves. Thus M. Bertillon concludes that the greater part of the excess of production over consumption is in Germany devoted to the augmentation of the population; whereas, in France, it is saved, and goes to swell the disposable capital of the country. In other words, wealth increases largely every year in France, whilst population remains almost stationary. In Germany, on the other hand, it is the population that grows rapidly, and wealth that remains almost stationary.

From the census of May, 1866 ("Statesman's Year Book") France had a population of ... 38,067,094

In 1872 ... 36,102,921

(*Daily News*, Nov., 1877) 1876 ... 36,905,788

The loss of Alsace-Lorraine took away 1,597,219

And other losses by war, &c. ... 366,954

Total loss by war, &c. 1,964,173

Professor Henry Fawcett, in a speech reported in the *Daily News* of October 22, 1877, says: "What justification is there for assuming either that England is so much more prosperous than France, or so much more wealthy? In England a greater number of very large fortunes may have been accumulated, but the well-being of a country is not to be estimated by the extent to which wealth is aggregated by a few; it is rather to be measured by the extent to which it is diffused amongst the community at large. In England it is notorious that those who are employed in tilling the land are as a class so poor that they live from hand to mouth, and have seldom saved sufficient to maintain themselves for a single week. The French peasantry, as a class, not only often own the land they cultivate, but are possessors of so much capital, that at the conclusion of the late Franco-German War the indemnity loan of two hundred millions sterling, which at first it was supposed would severely strain the resources of France, might have been entirely obtained from the savings of her rural population."

Let no one despair of converting the mass of mankind to any true doctrine. Listen, again, to Mr. J. S. Mill, on this point, in his "Principles of Political Economy," Book II., chap. xiii., § 2:

"Those who think it hopeless that the labouring classes should be induced to practise a sufficient degree of prudence in regard to the increase of their families, because they have hitherto stopped short of that point, show an inability to estimate the ordinary principles of human action. Nothing more would probably be necessary to secure that result, than an opinion generally diffused that it was desirable. As a moral principle, such an opinion has never yet existed in any country; it is curious that it does not so exist in countries in which, from the spontaneous operation of individual forethought, population is, comparatively speaking, efficiently repressed. What is preached as prudence is still not recognised as duty; the talkers and writers are mostly on the other side, even in France, where a sentimental horror of Malthus is almost as rife as in this country. Many causes may be assigned, besides the date of the doctrine, for its not having yet gained possession of the general mind. Its truth has, in some respects, been its detriment. One may be permitted to doubt whether, except among the poor themselves (for whose prejudices on this subject there is no difficulty in accounting), there has ever yet been, in any class of society, a sincere and

earnest desire that wages should be high. There has been plenty of desire to keep down the poor-rate; but, that done, people have been very willing that the working-classes should be ill off. Nearly all who are not labourers themselves are employers of labour, and are not sorry to get the commodity cheap."

The political enfranchisement of women would aid this greatly, according to Mr. Mill.

"It must be borne in mind also," he continues, "that the opinion here in question would have powerful auxiliaries in the great majority of women. It is seldom by the choice of the wife that families are too numerous; on her devolves (along with all the physical suffering and at least a full share of the privations) the whole of the domestic drudgery resulting from the excess. To be relieved from it would be hailed as a blessing by multitudes of women, who now never venture to urge such a claim, but who would urge it if supported by the moral feelings of the community. Among the barbarisms which law and morals have not yet ceased to sanction is, that any human being should be permitted to consider himself as having *a right* to the person of another.

"If the opinion were once generally established among the labouring class that their welfare required a due regulation of the numbers of families, the respectable and well-conducted of the body would conform to the prescription, and only those would exempt themselves from it who were in the habit of making light of social obligations generally; and there would be then an evident justification for converting the moral obligation against bringing children into the world who are a burthen to the community into a legal one; just as, in many other cases of the progress of opinion, the law ends by enforcing against recalcitrant minorities obligations which, to be useful, must be general, and which, from a sense of their utility, a large majority have voluntarily consented to take upon themselves. There would be no need, however, of legal sanctioning, if women were admitted, as on all other grounds they have the clearest title to be, to the same rights of citizenship with men. Let them cease to be confined by custom to one physical function as their means of living and their source of influence, and they would have for the first time an equal voice with men in what concerns that function.

"We are often told that the most thorough perception of the dependence of wages on population will not influence the conduct of a labouring man, because it is not the children he himself can have that will produce any effect in generally

depressing the labour market. True, and it is also true, that one soldier's running away will not lose the battle; accordingly, it is not that consideration which keeps each soldier in the ranks; it is the disgrace which naturally and inevitably attends on conduct by one individual which, if pursued by a majority, every one can see would be fatal. Men are seldom found to brave the general opinion of their class, unless supported either by some principle higher than regard for opinion, or by some strong body of opinion elsewhere."

If we do not take care in England, it seems that we shall, in company with Germany, remain for many years longer plagued with the terrible incubus of hopeless poverty and pauperism. The French have practically come to an end of this question; although, in future, French philosophy must be made to sanction, and not to run counter to common sense in this matter. Even the inhabitants of a new country like America think more clearly on it than we.

It is most remarkable that in Boston, Chicago, New York, and many other American cities, the practice of infanticide and abortion is now most widely spread. It is to be hoped that such customs, which are so totally opposed to the sanctity of human life, may prove ephemeral in the States. When we consider how dangerous to female life the procreation of infants is (amounting, according to Dr. Lyon Playfair and others, to about one maternal death in every 100 births), we may be sure, that women in the future will be most unwilling to give birth to any unwelcome child that is not likely to be a pride and pleasure to its parents.

Marriage and parentage should be as equally distributed as possible through the population of all States which desire to obtain the appellation of truly civilised, and which are already thickly peopled. At present, nations are still under the sway of old-fashioned ideas and unscientific traditions concerning all that relates to marriage and parentage. Catholic countries consider divorce and conjugal prudence inadmissible, both of which ideas are most opposed to human happiness. It seems, indeed, easy enough to prophesy that in the future, the whole of civilised Europe will begin seriously to consider the all-important question of how best to proportion numbers to food, when I am much mistaken if the French methods of coping with the great population difficulty will not be found to be the only one that can possibly secure to the masses of our race the three main requisites of happiness—food, love, and leisure.

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER OPINIONS ON THE PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION.

"ONLY when," says Mr. John Stuart Mill, "in addition to just institutions, the increase of mankind shall be under the deliberate guidance of a judicious foresight, can the conquests made from the powers of Nature by the intellect and energy of scientific discoverers become the common property of the species and the means of improving and elevating the universal lot."

Mr. James Mill, in his article on "Colonies," in the "Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica," has the following remark concerning the principle of population and the practical remedies for it: "This is, indeed, the most important practical problem to which the wisdom of the politician or the moralist can be applied. It has, till this time, been miserably evaded by all those who have meddled with the subject, as well as by all those who were called upon by their situation to find a remedy for the evils to which it relates. And yet, if the superstitions of the nursery were discarded, and the principle of utility kept steadily in view, a solution might not be difficult to be found, and the means of drying up one of the most copious sources of evil—a source which, if all other sources of evil were taken away, would alone suffice to retain the great mass of human beings in misery—would be seen to be neither doubtful nor difficult to be applied."

"To deny the Malthusian theory is, in reality, equivalent to a rejection of the whole modern science of Political Economy, just in the same way as to deny the laws of motion and gravitation would be to reject the astronomical and mechanical sciences," says the author of the "Elements of Social Science," one of the most important works on the subject we have ever read.

Mr. Ricardo, the great writer on the "Theory of Rent," in his "Principles of Political Economy," speaking of the "Essay on the Principle of Population," says: "The assaults of the opponents of this great work have only served to prove its strength; and I am persuaded that its great reputation will spread with the cultivation of that science of which it is so eminent an ornament."

Mr. Senior, in his treatise on "Political Economy," in the

"Encyclopædia Metropolitana," bases the science on the following elementary propositions: "1. That every man desires to obtain additional wealth with as little sacrifice as possible. 2. That the population of the world, or, in other words, the number of persons inhabiting it, is limited only by moral or physical evil, or by fear of a deficiency of those articles of wealth which the habits of the individuals of each class of its inhabitants lead them to require. 3. That the powers of labour and of the other instruments which produce wealth may be indefinitely increased by using their products as the means of further production. 4. That, agricultural skill remaining the same, additional labour employed on the land within a given district produces in general a less proportionate return; or, in other words, that though with every increase of the labour bestowed the aggregate return is increased, the increase of the return is not in proportion to the increase of the labour." He adds: "If the last of these propositions were false, no land except the very best could ever be cultivated; since, if the return from a single farm were to increase in full proportion to any amount of increased labour bestowed upon it, the produce of one farm might feed the whole population of England."

"There are no limits to the prolific power of plants and animals," says McCulloch, in his "Principles of Political Economy." "They are endued with a principle which impels them to increase their number beyond the nourishment provided for them. . . . The population of some of the States of North America has, after making every reasonable allowance for immigrants, continued for upwards of a century to double in every twenty, or, at most, five-and-twenty years. . . . In the United States every industrious individual who has attained a marriageable age may enter into the matrimonial contract without fear of the consequences, the largest family being there an advantage rather than otherwise. But such is not the case here, nor will it be the case in America after she has become comparatively populous."

Mr. Francis Place, a most honoured name in the history of the modern Malthusian controversy, in his reply to Mr. Godwin's attempt to refute Malthus' arguments, thus speaks: "If the tendency of population be to increase in a geometrical ratio, and the period of doubling be a short one, it follows, of course, that the mass of the people in an old country must remain in a state of wretchedness until they are convinced that their safety depends upon themselves, and that it can be

maintained in no other way than by their ceasing to propagate faster than the means of comfortable subsistence are produced. . . . If, above all, it were once clearly understood that it was not disreputable for married persons to avail themselves of such precautionary means as would, without being injurious to health, or destructive of female delicacy, prevent conception, a sufficient check might at once be given to the increase of population beyond the means of subsistence, and vice and misery to a prodigious extent might be removed from society. The course recommended will, I am fully persuaded, at some period be pursued by the people, even if left to themselves. If means were adopted to prevent the breeding of a larger number of children than married people might desire to have, and if the labouring part of the population could thus be kept below the demand for labour, wages would rise, so as to afford the means of a comfortable subsistence for all, and all might marry."

Modern theologians may well blush that they are so ignorant of Political Economy when they read the works of the eminent Scottish divine, Dr. Thomas Chalmers. In his work on that science he thus clearly shows the inanity of all proposals to better the condition of mankind without attending to the theory of Malthus. "All the remedies which have been proposed," he says, "may be classified under two descriptions. By the first, it is sought to provide the adequate means for the increasing numbers of mankind. By the second, to keep down the numbers to the stationary, or, comparatively speaking, to the slowly increasing means. . . . It is our main design to demonstrate the insufficiency of one and all of the remedies put together which belong to the first class, and to contrast with their operation the effect of the moral remedy, the prosperous economic state that will surely be realised through the medium of general intelligence or virtue, or by an action on the minds of the people themselves."

Mr. William Ellis, the well-known philanthropist, in his "Outlines of Social Economy," remarks that "in the more civilised states capital is large, power developed, and, if the country is but partially settled, as North America and the Australian colonies, large tracts of unoccupied land of great fertility, and abundance of food, await a rapidly increasing population; if the country be more fully settled, as England and France, the situation of the labourer is happy or miserable, according as the growing numbers are regulated by vir-

tuous, sober, prudent forethought, or by—we must not say war, pestilence, or famine, for these would imply *absence* of civilisation—but by insufficient and unwholesome food, inadequate clothing, scanty fuel, and confined and ill-ventilated dwellings."

That most distinguished lady, Miss Harriet Martineau, in her "Illustrations of Political Economy," writes as follows: "The grand principles are fully established which may serve as a key to all the mysteries relating to the distribution of wealth. Their application may require much time and patience; but we have them safe. Their final general adoption may be regarded as certain; and an incalculable amelioration of the conditions of society must follow of course. These principles are two: that, owing to the inequality of soils, the natural tendency of capital is to yield a perpetually diminishing return, and that the consumers of capital increase at a perpetually accelerated rate. The operation of these principles may be modified to any extent by the influence of others; but they exist: they are fully ascertained; and must henceforth serve as guides to all wise attempts to rectify an unjust distribution of the wealth of society."

Mr. George Combe, the popular author of many works on phrenology, whose essay "On the Constitution of Man" has been so extensively read, says, in his work on the "Relation between Science and Religion,"—"In this condition of mind I continued for several years, and recollect meeting with only two works which approached to the solution of any portion of the enigma which puzzled my understanding. These were Smith's 'Wealth of Nations,' and Malthus 'On Population.' I first read the work of Mr. Malthus in 1805, and he appeared to me to prove that God reigns, through the medium of fixed natural laws, in another department of human affairs—namely, in that of population. The facts adduced by him showed that the Creator has bestowed on men a power of increasing their numbers much beyond the ratio of the diminution that, in favourable circumstances, will be caused by death; and, consequently, they must limit their increase by moral restraint, or augment, by ever extending cultivation of the soil, their means of subsistence in proportion to their numbers, or expose themselves to the evil of being reduced by disease and famine to the number which the actual production of food will maintain."

Lord Brougham, at that time Lord Chancellor of England,

in moving the second reading of the Poor Law Amendment Act, of 1834, in the House of Lords, after entering fully into the Malthusian theory of population, said: "My Lords, those who framed the statute of Elizabeth were not adepts in political science—they were not acquainted with the true principles of population—they could not foresee that a Malthus would arise to enlighten mankind upon that important, but as yet little understood, branch of science; they knew not the true principle on which to frame a preventive check to the unlimited increase of the people."

Dr. Thomas Chalmers always strenuously resisted the introduction of a Poor Law such as obtains in England into Scotland; and, in like manner, Sir Robert Peel, in speaking of the introduction of the system into Ireland, thus spoke: "Looking at the tendency of an increased population already in Ireland, I should rather think that the application of these laws to it would, by holding out a settlement to the poor, remove every check to population, encourage early marriages, and a still greater subdivision of land."

Archbishop Whately, Mr. William Thornton, Sir Travers Twiss (formerly Professor of Political Economy at Oxford), Dr. Trail (editor of the "Encyclopædia Britannica") in his work on "Medical Jurisprudence," Mr. Buckle in his great work on the "History of Civilization in England," Mr. Charles Morison in his "Labour and Capital," and Mrs. Marcet in her "Conversations on Political Economy," may be mentioned as among the disciples of Malthus and his school of political economists. Mr. F. W. Newman is one of the only professed writers on Political Economy who have seemed entirely to oppose the teachings of Malthus.

In France and many other Continental countries the Malthusian theory has been acknowledged by the entire school of Political Economists. Thus, J. B. Say, writing, in 1803, in his "Traité d' Economie Politique," says, "Consult especially on this head, the 'Essay on Population' by Malthus, a work full of research and of sound reasonings; a work which has withstood the numerous criticisms directed against it, because it is founded on the experimental method, and on the veritable nature of things." The only good minister that the Pontifical State ever has possessed, M. Rossi, in his introduction to the French translation of Mr. Malthus's work, says: "There are few works the publication of which has given rise to more discussion than the 'Essay on Population by Malthus.' The illustrious author saw himself imme

diately surrounded by vehement opponents and zealous admirers. The question of population affects everything—morals, politics, national and domestic economy. The state, the family, the individual, are equally interested in this question. The population of North America has doubled more than once in less than twenty-five years. Evidently, what has taken place in America could take place everywhere. The physical organization and instincts of man are not affected by degrees of latitude. Let but prudence find its way into every household, and preside over the birth of every family, and there would be no cause for anxiety about the fate of the human race."

M. Joseph Garnier, from whom I have already quoted so much, in the "Dictionnaire de l'Economie Politique" (1852), says: "I admit that the charge of inefficacy would carry more weight with me; so much so, that I am led to declare openly and positively, that by prudence is to be understood not only delayed marriages, not only celibacy by those who are capable of practising it, but prudence during the married state itself." M. Proudhon had written a fierce invective against Malthusian views in his "Contradictions Economiques," and Garnier thus defends his position: "Can it be called immoral in the father of a family if he should wish to have only a limited number of children, proportioned to his means, and to the future which his affection fondly weaves for them; and if he should not, in carrying out this object, condemn himself to the most absolute and rigorous continence? But it is needless to enlarge on this point, and we content ourselves with leaving it to the decision of every enlightened conscience, and to that of M. Proudhon himself. Let any one ask himself whether it is more moral or more conscientious to give birth to children in the midst of privations, or prevent them being born—and let him reply."

M. Michel Chevalier, Professor of Political Economy in the Collège de France, whose name is well known in this country, speaking in 1847, says: "The 'Essay on Population' was saluted as a blessing to the world (by Malthus' disciples), and it was said that this modest minister of the Gospel had discovered the law of the modern order of society, just as Newton had wrested from nature the secret of the mechanism of the physical universe. Thus, gentlemen, behold us in face of the precepts of Malthus, in regard to the reproduction of the species. Let but population moderate its rate of increase, so as to remain behind the augmentation of the means of subsistence and employment; let mankind but exercise a suffi-

cient self-control, a sufficient ascendency over their passions, so as to adhere steadfastly to this guiding principle."

M. Legoyt, who was at the head of the statistical department in France, speaking of the French census of 1846, says: "According to these tables, France is the country of Europe the population of which advances the most slowly." (It would, he showed, take 200 years to double.) "Has France reason to complain of this inferiority in the increase of her population? We think not, and believe that all will share this opinion who reflect that the States where population most rapidly increases, such as England, Prussia, and Saxony, are precisely those where pauperism makes the most formidable progress."

M. Hippolyte Passy, in a report to the Academy of the Moral and Political Sciences of Paris, says: "The Academy is well aware how eminent a position the works of Malthus occupy." M. de Molinari, Professor of Political Economy at Brussels, says: "The socialist and protectionist writers, not to speak of a small number of self-styled defenders of religion, have combined to assail Malthus and his disciples with the most violent and unjust accusations. Malthus has had to run the gauntlet along the whole line. MM. Proudhon, Barat, Pierre Leroux, Damis, Louis Blanc, and Coquille, not to mention others, have vehemently attacked the 'Essay on Population.' But the work of the illustrious professor of Haileybury is entirely built on the solid basis of observation." M. Charles Comte, the friend of Bentham, says in an *éloge* on Malthus after his death in 1834, read before the Parisian Academy, "There are few works so celebrated as the 'Essay on the Principle of Population.'" M. Quetelet, Astronomer Royal at Brussels, says, in his "Système Social," "Experience as well as reasoning proves that we have a natural tendency to reproduce our species according to an ascending geometrical progression. This principle, which has long been recognised, and has been substantiated in many works, and especially in those of Malthus, has never been seriously contested by anyone."

Germany has not had so many able political economists as France, but the following citations will show that the ablest men in that country have been pupils of Malthus. Herr Rau, Professor of Political Economy at Heidelberg, says: "The sole condition by which a due proportion between population and the means of subsistence can be maintained consists in this, that only a certain number of new marriages be con-

tracted." Professor Mohl, in the "Staats-Lexicon," says: "At least ten children would be the issue of a marriage according to the simple organic laws of nature." Professor Hegewisch, who translated Malthus into German, says: "The 'Essay on Population was a revelation of the laws of the moral world, comparable to the discovery of the laws of the physical world by Newton." To these names may be added those of Ambrose Clement, de Bruckère, burgomaster of Brussels; M. Wolowski, M. Montjean, translator of Malthus' essay into French; Count Duchatel, Count Arrivabene, who translated Senior's lectures; MM. Guillaumin and Coquelin, publishers of the "Journal des Economistes;" M. Prevost, the translator of Smith's "Wealth of Nations;" Horace Say, Cherbuliez, &c. Political Economy, as Garnier says, is "one and the same from Naples to Moscow; its fundamental ideas, its general laws, its principles, are everywhere the same." In Spain, Don Florez Estrada, in his lectures on Political Economy, says: "Malthus, for having established in the most luminous way the doctrine of population, on which theory depends the lot of the classes who live by their labour, is, in my opinion, the economist who has given to the science the most important contribution since Adam Smith." In Italy, Signore Antonio Scialoja, of the Turin University, says: "America doubles its population every twenty-five years, and the vacuum which wars and epidemics create in society is soon filled up." In Russia, M. Storch and M. Bowtowski were both disciples of Malthus, and professors of Political Economy.

The admirable works of Mr. John Stuart Mill have of late so popularized the doctrines of the economists in England, that a few able young men some twelve years ago started in London a new society, the "London Dialectical Society," for the purpose of discussing all such difficult questions in morals and social science. The very first paper read at the London Dialectical Society was one by myself, "On the Causes of Poverty," wherein I enunciated the views of Mill and Garnier. Ever since that time one or two debates on a similar subject have occupied the attention of the society every session. I insert one of these, reported by myself in the journal "The Public Health," at that time edited by my kind friend, Dr. William Hardwicke, now Coroner for Central Middlesex, and which reads thus:—

"At a crowded meeting of the Dialectical Society, held in the Medical Society's rooms on July 1st, 1868, Vice-Presi-

dent Lord Amberly in the chair, a paper was read by James Laurie, Esq., formerly inspector of schools, "On the Happiness of the Community, as affected by Large Families." Among those present were Dr. Steele, of Guy's Hospital, Mr. Couper, London Hospital, Mr. and Mrs. F. Malleson, Mr. Sterling, of New York, &c.

"The author of the paper showed, by reference to history, both from that contained in the Bible and in other works, how that the constant state of human society had been one of continual struggle for existence, which struggle for existence had been caused by the well-known tendency of all organised beings to reproduce their numbers more rapidly than they could obtain food. The 'Law of Population' had, he explained, been frequently described by writers among the Greeks and other nations. For example, both Plato and Aristotle had been fully conscious of its truth; but, it was not until the admirable work of Malthus, written about the commencement of this century, that the question had been clearly made out, and it was now one of the most certain acquisitions of science that the race to which we belonged had the power of doubling its numbers by the mere power of fecundity it possessed in 25 years or less, when supplied with the necessary food. As a consequence of this law, Mr. Laurie added, it was impossible to get rid of poverty in old and long-peopled countries such as this without a most careful limitation of the size of families; and he quoted from the great work on 'Political Economy' by Mr. J. S. Mill, to show how many fallacies were common on this head, persons actually contending that paupers in the workhouse should be allowed to engender hereditary paupers. After explaining that emigration did not go nearly fast enough to take off the surplus population of Europe, and adverting to the cultivation of waste land and other so-called remedies for over-population, Mr. Laurie summed up by saying, that the least disagreeable of all the ways of preventing over-population and poverty seemed to him to be the small-family system, prevailing, to a certain extent, in France and elsewhere."

After some other speakers, "Mr. Bradlaugh thought that no subject could possibly prove more interesting than that now before the Society. He believed that there was no longer any doubt that population had a tendency to increase far more rapidly than the means of existence, and Mr. McSweeney had shown that there existed most frightful destitution, which he (Mr. B.) held was caused by that tendency to increase too rapidly.

With regard to Dr. Chapman's argument, as to crushing out the inferior races, the very people who were the most suffering were the ones who bred the more rapidly; and, consequently, there was no use of advising them to do so, if this were the cause of their poverty. And as to what Mr. Levy had said, everyone might suppose that he belonged to that superior section of society which had the right to breed, and put off the disagreeable necessity of self-denial on some other persons, whom he considered not up to the mark. As to emigration, it had been tried to an immense extent, and failed, in Ireland. Many of the strongest persons and the male population went away, frequently leaving the weaker and the women behind. The speake observed that he was well acquainted with the working classes in many parts of the country, and he knew that this important subject was engaging their attention to a great degree in many places. The amount of wretched misery and poverty which existed throughout our large towns was enough t make anyone ashamed of the race to which he belonged; and, although the subject of large families was a delicate one, it was cruel not to handle it. He would observe, that e had been far more severely attacked for holding the views of Malthus and Mill than for being a sceptic in religion; and a writer in the '*Revue des Deux Mondes*' had recently attacked him severely for Malthusianism, a word not known in France, the writer said. This was curious, si ıce families were small there.

"Lord Amberley said the subject brought forward by Mr. Laurie was of first-rate importance. There was no doubt that preven ion of over-population was far the best method of attacking the evil. How was that notion best to be spread? He was glad to hear Mr. Bradlaugh say that the working classes were beginning to debate this vital point. Unfortunately, the influence of the clergy, in common with that of societ;, and the natural passions of mankind, were opposed to the prevention of over-population. He believed, indeed, that women would naturally have a stronger feeling against large families, had they any say in the matter, and if their opinions were more heard. He was truly glad to hear the credit of the discovery given to the great Malthus. Like all other disc.overies, there was something wanting to work out the details of Malthus' views, and the way in which population could be prevented with the least pain and discomfort. He ventured to think that the proposition of Mr. McSweeney, that the evils of over-population could be

remedied by taking the hunting grounds of the nobility, was erroneous. If it would do so, he, for one, did he possess such a park, would gladly give it to do away with poverty; but, in fact, population would swallow up all such small gifts in a few years, and leave only less open spaces for all to enjoy. Emigration was good, but not rapid enough to relieve the pressure caused by rapid multiplication. The practical conclusion from all of which considerations seemed to him to be, that Malthus was correct, and that, if we were to escape from poverty, it must be by means of limitation of our families. We naturally objected to war and famine. He, Lord Amberley, objected to celibacy. Well, then, the only remaining alternative seemed to him to be small families; and this was, in fact, a medical question. He much wished he could stay to hear the opinion of the medical gentlemen in the room, whether it was possible to restrain the size of families without measures which were injurious to health. The American ladies were in the habit of keeping back their families; but the means used by these ladies seemed to him, as far as he had heard, dangerous to health; and hence he should much like to hear discussion upon the point, whether some less hurtful means could be suggested. It was remarkable that the subject should have first been taken up in the United States of America, where it was not so much needed as in Europe, where over-population was so common.

"Mr. Rigby Smith and Dr. Drysdale supported the views of Malthus and Mill, as did also Mr. J. H. Levy.

"Mr. Nasmith, barrister-at-law, said that over-production of children was dependent a great deal upon fashion. It was the fashion in England to have large families; and in France, as all knew, a great number of persons considered it wrong to have more than two or three children.

"Dr. Roberts contended that the question of over-population was the question of the day. It was quite clear that the means of subsistence must precede population, or those children which were born would die. This, too, was also illustrated by the well-known fact that whenever wages rose, and times were better, the working classes immediately married, and thus reduced the rate of wages in a year or two to the starvation point. Every improvement, such as the abolition of the corn-laws, &c., was soon swallowed up by the rapid increase of population, and no real improvement in the condition of the working classes was to be expected until they began to limit the size of their families. The means to

be adopted could not be spoken of openly in a mixed audience; but they ought to be studied, and only required a slight acquaintance with the laws of nature, and a disbelief in the dogmas of popular faith, to make them acted upon by the labouring class.

"Mr. Fox Bourne, editor of the *Examiner*, contended that emigration was only a remedy for evils already existing. The evils ought to be prevented from existing at all; and the best way, indeed, the only feasible way, to arrive at this wished-for result was by a great limitation of the size of families. No doubt this, like all other restraint, was disagreeable, and was an evil. This all admitted. But it was the least of all the evils we had to choose from, and hence this method of checking population and removing poverty was the best."

Nothing has done so much for the popularisation of the truths contained in the Malthusian Theory as the prosecution of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, editor of the *National Reformer*, and of Mrs. Annie Besant, for publishing a work by Dr. Knowlton, which gives practical details on this question. In the words of Professor Alexander Bain, it has advanced the question by a quarter of a century.

Believing that debates prove interesting to many who shun more formal treatises, I here quote from a recent meeting of the London Dialectical Society, on April 18th, 1877, when a paper was read by myself, entitled "Physiology and Morality," in the Langham Hall, and a large audience of some 200 persons was present. The report thus reads: "Dr. Drysdale said: Ever since the commencement of this extraordinary century, the ablest thinkers have been aware of the existence of a set of economical doctrines, which have been silently effecting a revolution in the moral sentiments of philosophers. In previous centuries, the views of the Roman Catholic Church had been mainly accepted, not in the matter of their theological dogmata, but in so far as morals in the most important branch—sexual morality—was concerned. A clergyman of the Protestant Church of England, Mr. Malthus, was the first who effected a terrible breach in the continuity of that system of morals which had received the sanction of the Church ever since the reigns of Constantine and Justinian. What is called *Christian*, but should rather be termed *theological*, morality was not the work of Christ or the Apostles, but is of much later origin, having been built up by the Catholic Church of the first five centuries, and, although not implicitly adopted by moderns and

Protestants, has been much less modified by them than might have been expected. In its horror of sensuality, it made an idol of asceticism, which has gradually been compromised away into one of legality.

"By the publication of his great work on the Principle of Population, Mr. Malthus inaugurated the interminable discussions on population, on marriage, and the family, which have, ever since 1798, agitated society to its depths. Showing, as he did, that our race was no exception to the rule of animated life on this planet; and that, like other animals and plants, we also were impelled by our instincts to starve ourselves by over-reproduction, Malthus was, it must be confessed, the greatest schismatic in morals that has ever appeared in the history of our race. His arguments startled the placid believers in the ultimate perfectibility of the race, and gave a rude shock to those who, like Rousseau and his disciples, were enamoured of the sublime mercies of the Creator. To trust in Providence, according to his teaching, in the matter of bringing children into the world, was soon seen to be only a form of fatalism; and, thus, never was such a death-blow dealt at the whole superstructure of the theological casuists as by his immortal essay. Hence, no man was ever so attacked, or so often thought to be demolished, utterly and ignominiously, as this writer during his life-time. Even the divine young poet, Percy B. Shelley, the most scientific of modern poets, attacked his theory with impetuosity, whilst the Catholic Church put an anathema on Malthus' tenets, which still extends in most countries to those who accept his teachings.

"Mr. Malthus fully recognised the importance of marriage; he knew perfectly well what privations arose from celibacy; but he was the first to show that marriage, when accompanied by large numbers of children, was the main cause of almost every evil that falls to the lot of our race—wars, famines, fevers and other diseases, and to death by starvation. The discovery of this great cause of the worst evils that assail our race was made partly by a deep course of study of ancient writers, pursued by him whilst a student at Cambridge and elsewhere, and confirmed by personal observation of what was taking place in most Continental countries at the epoch when he wrote his essay. It may, however, he doubted whether Malthus' views would have ever been so well understood, but for the notorious example of the powers of multiplication possessed by the species in the modern

United States of America. Statistics compiled from the official census show that the population of the United States, which, in 1790, numbered 3,929,000, *quadrupled* itself in fifty years, being, in 1840, 17,062,000, and having risen in 1870 to 38,558,171.

"These figures of themselves prove the Law of Population of Malthus, and show that by the mere powers of fecundity our race can easily double its numbers in twenty-five years or less, when abundantly supplied with food and the requisites of existence in a healthy climate. England has once only, as a most unexampled feat, doubled her population in some fifty years; and French population is all but stationary. What, then, has restrained the population of this country, and above all of France, that they have not doubled so fast as America? In Malthus's phraseology, two classes of checks have restrained us—the *preventive* and the *positive*. We have married much later than the inhabitants of the United States; have had more diseases and early deaths, especially among our children, and more prostitution, which means sterility among a limited class of women resorted to by celibate men.

"Mr. Malthus, writing in the dark days of clerical and legal intolerance, was obliged to write warily; and hence *his* advice, above all, pointed to late marriage as the only possible cure for the evils of over-population. At the present time, and ever since the works of Mr. J. S. Mill and other similar productions have thrown a flood of clear light over this grand subject, the manner of restricting the over-tendency to population recommended by those who write on the science of society has been to a great extent the limitation of the size of families. It was soon seen by the followers of Malthus, that even late marriages, for instance, when the husband was thirty-five and the wife twenty-five, might be followed by large families; and, hence, the teachings of Mill, Sismondi, and others, pointed to the idea, that married persons had no more right to overstock the labour-market than single persons; and, indeed, whether they were rich or poor. Mr. Mill's famous sentence—'Little improvement can be expected in morality, until the producing of large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness or any other physical excess'—is a summing up of the modern views on the subject; and Sismondi and Joseph Garnier have shown clearly that in such countries as Italy and France, where no great emigration takes place, the size of the family ought

almost invariably to be such as merely to replace the father and mother, *i.e.*, should generally be limited to two. Among those who, in our time, have borne witness to the tenets of Malthus and Mill, the members of the London Dialectical Society have long been in the foremost ranks; and naturally the most important question in economical science and in sexual morality has often been debated in this society. It will then be my duty to show you what has already been said on this subject in 1868 by some of ourselves, when Mr. Laurie read his paper on *Large Families and Public Health.* I am the more anxious to do so, because at this moment a most audacious attempt is being made in our midst to stifle the discussion of this question by the suppression of a pamphlet written forty years ago, advocating the views of J. S. Mill, Sismondi, Garnier, and Alexander Bain; and because two of the most distinguished members of this Society are now threatened with loss of liberty and other social benefits for having dared to republish this work. These are exactly (says Mr. J. S. Mill) the occasions in which the men of one generation commit those dreadful mistakes which excite the astonishment and horror of posterity. It is among such that we find the instances memorable in history, where the arm of the law has been employed to root out the best men and the noblest doctrines.

"Apart from the sufferings which are entailed on the parents by the production of large families in old countries—and this is a matter which cries aloud for our consideration—the children of the labouring classes are literally murdered by being brought into the world in numbers totally out of proportion to the means provided for their subsistence. The mortality among the infants of the poor is often three times as great in the first years of life as among the children of the rich. Professional men and the richer classes live in this country on an average at present to 55, the working classes only to 35. In short, there is no advantage merely in being born; it is only when life is a happy affair that it is desirable.

"Mr. J. H. Levy contended that life, in the eyes of the true moralist, was an evil when it brought nothing but misery. As Professor Cairnes had remarked, no one who had made even a superficial study of political economy could question but that it was simply begging the question to suppose that, provided they were healthy, people did good in bringing children into the world; for the greater the number of

children, the more depressed was the margin of cultivation in a country. In a land like this, where it was necessary to manufacture goods to buy food from the foreigner, the position was most perilous; for, if we were cut out in our manufactures, we could be cut out of our means of subsistence. The competition of foreign countries compelled us to lower the prices of our manufactures, and this might go on till they reached the starvation point, which might possibly result in a revolution that would shake society to its roots. For a whole twelvemonth the bank rate had stood at 2 per cent., and 1 to 1½ in the open market. Simultaneously with this, lower wages had been prevalent, and in Germany and other Continental countries this held true. France alone had not suffered, and the reason, he contended, for this was to be found in the means used in that country to check population. He also strongly urged the necessity of parents striving to bring strong and healthy children into the world; for not only the limitation, but the improvement of the race, was a vital consideration.

"Miss Vickery, Chemist by Examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, spoke as follows:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I have long entertained the opinion that the question of over-population and large families is one which imperatively demands immediate attention, if we really and sincerely desire energetically to attack the glaring evils of society. All other questions appear to me to be merely subsidiary to this; even the enfranchisement of women, which I ardently desire, and which I have long worked for, and hope before very long will become a reality, must, in my idea, prove of but little use to women unless it gives them the power of deciding upon the numbers of their offspring. Any woman who (unless she is exceedingly wealthy) gives birth, in an over-peopled country like this, to a numerous family, has, as a rule, to give up all that makes life a desirable thing, and is often reduced to the most hopeless slavery and subjection. But I would say more than this. It seems to me exceedingly undesirable for any woman, no matter how rich she may be, to have many children. (Hear, hear.) In the first place, it is impossible that she should have the same affection for a crowd of children as she would have for a few, and this is unfair upon what has been called by an American author 'the unwelcome child;' and I ask—Is the intellectual life of a woman of so little account that all care for it is to be neglected, and treated as of not the slightest

utility to the common weal? Furthermore, are there not many women whose health—nay, whose lives—are sacrificed to the blind tenets of those theological moralists, who speak as if all prudence in the matter of restraining families after marriage was the one sin which *their* Deity could *never* pardon? If, indeed, it were proved by scientific inquiries that the welfare of the State required that all women should bring into the world, after marriage, as many children as chance or blind fate might send them, women, like soldiers sent on a dangerous enterprise (for child-bearing, it should be known, *is* dangerous to the life of women, since, according to Dr. Playfair, somewhat like one out of every hundred child-births results in the death of the mother) would accept their duties in the procreation of large families without a murmur, as indeed they have hitherto done. But how stands the case? With most perfect unanimity, every writer of note on political economy since the great essay of Malthus on 'Population,' written in 1798, including the two Mills, Senior, Ricardo, Cairnes, Fawcett, and a host of others, have shown that the salient cause of almost every evil of civilized life is the over-rapid multiplication of the species. Now statistics show that the crowding of our society with new comers is due almost entirely to married people; it follows that large families must be looked upon as the cause of poverty and its countless concomitant evils. Since the commencement of this century, instances have been known where population in the United States has doubled itself in little more than twenty years, and if we remember the physiological conditions of women, commencing, as they do, to be able to reproduce themselves at the age of sixteen, and continuing that faculty nearly to the age of fifty, it must be seen that every healthy woman tends during her life to give birth at the very least to ten or twelve children. I say, that if we reflect upon this fact, we can easily understand how it has been asserted that population, if abundantly supplied with food, might double in some twelve to twenty-five years.

"The remarks of Mr. H. Fawcett, in his work *On Pauperism* are a sufficient reply to that strange school of naturalists who seem to wish to upset the whole of morality on behalf of a supposed tendency of poverty and the 'struggle for existence' to cause the survival of the fittest and best. Such uncomfortable fatalists seem to forget that man is the only judge of what is fittest, either in animals or in his own species, and that, whether among the lower animals or in his own race,

the immeasurably swiftest method of improving the breed is to provide plenty of nourishment, and rationally to select the parents of the new generation.

"There are two sets of commodities which are differently affected by a rapid increase of population such as ours. The first comprehend those that can be easily imported; the second are those which are so perishable, that they cannot be procured from any very distant country; of this latter class are fresh meat, butter, and milk; the rise in their price consequent upon an increase in population is, of course, much more marked than is the case with such a commodity as corn, which can be readily imported. It is a matter of everyday remark that meat, butter, and milk are gradually becoming dearer, with the result that every day they become more and more out of reach of the poor. Many a labourer and his family seldom taste meat more than once a week. Milk is often very difficult to obtain in country districts, and is so dear in towns that this may be looked upon as one of the chief causes of rickets and early deaths among the poor.

"When a country has once been sufficiently peopled for the requirements of its industry, so that sufficient population exists for the carrying out of the requisite division of labour, every addition of population, even if not hurtful, is quite unnecessary. It almost always is hurtful, because it crowds people into towns, and deprives them of the thousand innocent pleasures which result from the contemplation of the beauties of nature. So that, if the population of these islands did not increase by one unit during the remainder of this century, we should have everything to gain and nothing to lose by the stationary state which has been reached in France. M. Taine some years ago wrote some excellent letters upon English society to one of the French newspapers. Speaking of the enormous families so frequently seen in England, he says: 'English parents must either be far braver or far crueller than French parents, to bring so many children into the world to struggle in such an overcrowded state of society.'

"Mrs. Swaagman said: Ladies and Gentlemen,—The question of over-population, with its effects upon public welfare, is one of such vast importance, that it behoves every woman acquainted with it to do all in her power to let other women know what are the facts of the case. The proposition of Mr. Malthus, that there is a tendency in human beings to increase much more rapidly than they can obtain food, is

indisputable. That population has often doubled in less than thirty years in America, seems, when this view of the matter is taken into account, not in the least remarkable; nay, we may well be surprised that there are no records of population having doubled in twelve or fifteen years. Such being the case, the checks to population which exist in old countries like England and France, the population of which latter is nearly stationary, must, of course, have been numerous, as far as history extends its records.

"¿At the present moment in France, where the births seem to be about equal with the deaths, the main check to population, from all that we can learn, is the prudential restraint upon families, for the French do not lose many of their members by emigration, and the length of life is now longer than it has ever been in the history of that country. Now, I ask, is it not clear as daylight to any unprejudiced mind that the French people are most wise and moral in preferring to the hideous checks of former days, which still obtain so greatly in less civilised nations, the parental responsibility, and the limitation of the family to the income of the parents? This seems to me to be above all a woman's question (if there be such a thing as a woman's question); for how is it possible for women to have anything like an independent existence so long as they are compelled by the ignorant behests of the conventional moralists to bring into the world hosts of unfortunate children doomed to misery and to life-long degradation? What leisure can they expect for the cultivation of their intellect and the development of themselves as moral beings, so long as their whole mission in the world is to give birth to as many children as their physical capacity will enable them to do? If we are ever to have a theory of human life, it must be based upon the Malthusian theory of population. If we want to see the children of the poorest classes live as long as the rich now live, we must abolish indigence; and that is impossible so long as people are so profligate with regard to the numbers of their children. If we wish to get rid of prostitution, we must make marriage more attractive, and the reason that marriage is so frequently unattractive at the present day is that many married people, on account of large families, are so very poor. If we wish to get rid of the inequality of the sexes, caused by emigration (nearly three-quarters of a million surplus of women in the British islands), we must make wages higher in England, and this can only be done by limiting the number of those who compete for the

capital of the country. Do we wish to get rid of drunkenness and superstition? let us get rid of poverty, for the poor are they who fly to drink and to super-naturalism as a relief from the agony of their daily existence. Finally, do we wish to fill human life with varied pleasures and happiness, and make it a blessed existence from the cradle to the grave, the price we have to pay for it is now well-known—women must be content with two or three children; and, I believe, that women will easily be content with this, for I speak in the name of my sisters when I say that we have too long groaned under the insuperable difficulties caused by too large families, and that we shall hail it as an unmixed blessing, when the voice of the highest moralists in society shall aid us, instead of putting obstacles in our way, in obtaining for ourselves and our children the blessings of plenty and prosperity."

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROSECUTION OF MALTHUSIAN WORKS.

HISTORICAL.—Soon after the publication of Mr. Malthus' work on population, it was noticed by various authors that in France the practice of "conjugal prudence" had taken the place of late marriage to a great extent. Mr. Francis Place, among others, wrote a work in which he recommended the physical checks so commonly made use of in French families for adoption by his countrymen. It is said that Mr. Robert Owen, the well-known philanthropist, before making his noted socialistic experiment of an industrial community at New Lanark, in Scotland, whilst conversing with Mr. Francis Place about his sanguine expectations, was met by the reply that his plan would be certain to fall to pieces; because, as soon as the work people of his new factory became well off, they would be certain to marry so fast, and have so many children, that poverty would very soon make its way among them, and the community would then break up. "Is there any remedy for this?" said Robert Owen.—"Yes," said Mr. Place. "The French people, even when married, are careful only to have two or three children." Mr. Owen, on hearing this, started for Paris, and studied the methods made use of by Parisian parents to limit their families. On his return he

founded New Lanark, which was, as all know who are curious in these matters, a great success, owing, probably, to the advice given by Mr. Owen to his work people on the great question of *conjugal prudence.*

Mr. Robert Dale Owen, son of Mr. Robert Owen, who emigrated many years ago to the United States, and was ambassador of that country in Europe for some time, having learnt the merits of the case from his father, wrote a pamphlet on this question, entitled, "Moral Physiology;" in which he mentioned how that, in France, it was the custom to limit the number of children to the means at the command of the family; and, in addition to this, in his edition of 1830 (New York) he gave a description of the physical checks made use of. The book was much read and commented upon in America. I should mention that Mr. Richard Carlile, had written, previous to the publication of this work, a tract on the same subject, called "Every Woman's Book." Dr. Charles Knowlton, an able Boston physician, on reading Dale Owen's pamphlet, was so struck with its importance as a contribution to the science of hygiene, that he published, in 1833, a work entitled, the "Fruits of Philosophy," addressed to young married persons, giving a popular description of the anatomy of the organs of reproduction, especially in the female, and a somewhat more detailed account of the physical checks than had been given by Mr. Dale Owen.

This work, in addition to those of Carlile, Owen, and one by Mr. Austin Holyoake, entitled, "Large or Small Families," were sold openly for some forty years in London by Mr. Watson, Mr. Truelove, and other booksellers of the extreme liberal party in politics and religion. In the year 1876, the "Fruits of Philosophy," after circulating unchallenged more than forty years, was attacked as an obscene publication under the new Act of Parliament called "Lord Campbell's Act," and a Bristol bookseller, named Cook, was sentenced, for selling it, to two years' imprisonment. The publisher in London, Mr. C. Watts, was also prosecuted for selling it; but on his submission was let off with the payment of costs. The work would thus have been suppressed, had it not been that Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, editor of the *National Reformer*, a journal of the extreme liberal party, in company with a most distinguished lady, Mrs. Annie Besant, had come forward and volunteered to sell it, in order to try the case; and for this purpose they entered upon a business partnership, and sold the work openly in a shop

at 28, Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, London. Mr. Charles Bradlaugh had long been an avowed "Malthusian," and Mrs. Besant also was thoroughly convinced of the importance of this question.

The case was tried at the Guildhall, before one of the city aldermen, Mr. Figgins, a type founder, and formerly M.P. for Shrewsbury. He tried it patiently; but being evidently very ignorant of such matters, he naturally turned the question over to the courts. Mr. Bradlaugh being well versed in legal matters, had the case carried before the Queen's Bench; and the Lord Chief Justice (Cockburn) tried it on the 18th June, 1877. The jury was composed of the following names—destined to be remembered in history:—

Alfred Upward, gentleman, 16, Linden Gardens; Augustus Vœlcker, 39, Argyle Road, chemist; Captain Alfred Henry Waldy, 9, Stanhope Gardens, esquire: Robert Wallace, 32, Lancaster Road, North, gentleman; Edmund Waller, 33, St. Mary Abbot's Terrace, gentleman; Arthur Walter, 152, Queen's Gate Terrace, gentleman (son of the proprietor of the *Times*); Charles Alfred Walter, 7, Holland Road, gentleman; John Ward, 79, Ladbroke Grove, gentleman; Arthur Warre, 109, Onslow Square, Brompton, gentleman. Two other common jurymen were enrolled to make up the twelve, but I have not learnt their names.

The details of this most important and interesting trial are given in a handsome volume published by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, from the shorthand writers' notes; and it will therefore only be necessary for me to glance at the salient features of the case.

The prosecutors were so afraid of being pointed at, as acting in the case, that to this day it is not known who they were. The Solicitor-general, whose name was Giffard, acted as the prosecuting counsel, aided by two barristers of the names of Straight and Mead. The chief points in the charge of the counsel for the prosecution were that Dr. Charles Knowlton, the author of the work, had put forward the use of certain physical checks to the propagation of children, with the *avowed* purpose of preventing poor married persons from having more children than they could afford; whilst the *real* purpose of the work was to permit all persons to give way to their passions without the dread of bringing children into the world. He urged that he should be prepared to argue before the jury that if confined to that object alone (of conjugal prudence) it would still be most mischievous. The Christian religion was happily still a part of the law of this country.

and, if it were confined to that recommendation, he should certainly have a great deal to say to it, and would point out that it was immoral in the higher sense to which his lordship at the commencement of the case referred. He felt it would be inappropriate to enter into a discussion of this character, because it would appear to concede that this book was only intended for circulation among such persons (married).

Mrs. Besant, in a defence destined to live in history, observed that the Solicitor-General had said he did not impute bad intent to her or Mr. Bradlaugh for publishing Dr. Knowlton's work. "What bad intent could there be? I had nothing to gain in publishing this work. I had much to lose. It is no light thing for a woman, whose ambition is bound up in the name which she hopes to make, to have the imputation thrown upon her of publishing indecent books, and of disseminating obscenity amongst the young. I risk my name, I risk my liberty; and it is not without deep and earnest thought that I have entered into this struggle." . . . Referring to the idea of the prosecution that the intent did not matter in this case, Mrs. Besant said: "I say, gentlemen, that the intent is the vital part of the charge. The intent of the book is what you really will have to judge. The learned Solicitor-General put that strongly when he said there was a colourable pretence of philosophy, a colourable use of the word marriage, when really what was contended was not to give philosophy, but gratification of passions—not to teach married people how to restrain their families, but to teach the unmarried how wrongly to gratify their passions. How utterly untrue that is, I shall show you, as I go through the pages of the book . . . I admit that there is no justification in law for publishing an obscene book. I admit that if this book is obscene, no amount of good and pure intentions on my part can possibly purge it from its obscenity. I bow thoroughly here to the judgment laid down by the Lord Chief Justice in this case. But I contend that this is not an obscene book, and that, therefore, the case of the Queen *v.* Hicklin has no authority here." In another part of her speech, she quoted the "Essay on Liberty," by Mr. John Stuart Mill, when he says, in speaking of the putting down of the liberty of expressing opinions: "I deny the right of the people to exercise such coercion either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate; the best government has no more title

to it than the worst. It is as noxious, or more noxious, when exerted in accordance with public opinion than when in opposition to it. If all mankind, minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."

Speaking subsequently of the pamphlet under prosecution, she says: "Amongst the French doctors' books I have read in the course of this defence, I have found some objections raised to some of the checks put forward by Dr. Knowlton. But, I say, you cannot deal with this question, unless every man is free to put forward his medical knowledge without fear of prevention, or the disgrace of obscenity being attached to the book that he may issue. We advocate scientific checks to population, because so long as poor men have large families, pauperism is a necessity; and from pauperism grow crime and disease. . . . Our object is not to destroy marriage, but to make it more widely prevalent: not to encourage prostitution, but to destroy that which is a very prolific source of prostitution, the shrinking of young men from marriage, because of the terrible responsibility that marriage often brings with it."

After explaining the law of Malthus most fully and clearly, Mrs. Besant remarks that all great writers say that "unless you can find some way of limiting the population of the world by preventive checks, you must be content to remain with those old barbarous means, which the Solicitor-General said were the provisions made by God and nature for our benefit. Those provisions are—war, famine, disease, misery, starvation, overcrowding, preventible disease, infanticide, baby-farming, and all other horrors of our civilization; these are the means which the Solicitor-General says God and Providence gave us, in order to prevent the over-increase of population." After quoting Malthus to the effect that population in the United States had often doubled in twenty-five years, she mentions that Professor Draper had stated that in some of the States it had actually doubled itself in twelve years, excluding the contingent furnished by emigration. A letter was quoted from Professor Bain, of Aberdeen, to the defendants, in which he alluded to the trial "as one of the most critical trials in the history of our liberties."

Mr. Montague Cookson, Queen's Counsel, in an article which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* of October, 1872,

entitled, "The Morality of Married Life," says:—"However unpalateable the truth, it is useless to disguise the fact, that the sources of food are limited; whereas, but for war and disease, which many people openly treat as special interferences in man's favour, the augmentation of human beings would be unlimited."

With regard to overcrowding, Mrs. Besant quoted the following telling passage from the essay of Mr. George Godwin, F.R.S., read before the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science:

Mr. Godwin there says: "Evidences of overcrowding turn up from time to time where they are not looked for. It was but the other day that a child was found dead in Brownlow Street, and on inquiry it was learnt that the mother, a widow, and six children, slept in one bed in a small room. . . . The basement of a house in Bemerton Street, Caledonian Road, below the level of the street, contains, in the front room, an old man and his wife; in the back room, two lodgers: in the parlours there are a man and his wife and eight children: on the first floor a man and his wife and infant, two girls, 16 and 18 years of age, and occasionally their mother, all in the front room; and in the small back room, two women, a girl, and two young children: on the second floor, a father, mother, two grown-up sons, an infant, and a brood of rabbits. Two women and two boys in the back room make the whole population of the house thirty-four. In the next house there were thirty-three persons similarly divided."

The Rev. J. Fraser, now Bishop of Manchester, says in some evidence given in 1868, before a Royal Commission:—"I only wonder that our agricultural poor are as moral as they are. Modesty must be an unknown virtue, decency an unimaginable thing, where, in one small chamber, with the beds lying as thickly as they can be packed, father, mother, young men, lads, grown and growing-up girls—two, and sometimes three generations—are herded promiscuously; where every operation of the toilette and of nature—dressings, undressings, births, deaths—is performed by each within the sight and hearing of all; where children of both sexes, to as high an age as twelve and fourteen, or even more, occupy the same bed; where the whole atmosphere is sensual, and human nature is degraded into something below the level of the swine."

Dr. Lancaster, late Coroner for Central Middlesex, once stated that there were some 16,000 mothers in London who had committed infanticide from overlying their infants.

Professor Fawcett mentions that whereas among the children of the richer classes only some 20 per cent. die before the age of five years, this amount is more than doubled among the children of the poorer classes.

Mrs. Besant then, in a most chivalrous way, introduced the objection taken by Mr. Darwin of late to the teachings of the modern or French Malthusian school. In a letter to the defendants, written a few days before, Mr. C. Darwin points to the following passage in his "Descent of Man," p. 618 :—"The advancement of the welfare of mankind is a most intricate problem; all ought to refrain from marriage who cannot avoid abject poverty for their children, for poverty is not only a great evil, but tends to its own increase by leading to recklessness in marriage. On the other hand, as Mr. Galton has remarked, if the prudent avoid marriage, whilst the reckless marry, the inferior members tend to supplant the better members of society. Man, like every other animal, has no doubt advanced to his present high condition through a struggle for existence, consequent on his rapid multiplication; and, if he is to advance still higher, it is to be feared that he must remain subject to a severe struggle, otherwise he would sink into indolence, and the more gifted man would not be more successful in the battle of life than the less gifted. Hence our natural rate of increase, though leading to many and obvious evils, must not be greatly diminished by any means."

Mrs. Besant replies to this:—"I have no doubt that if natural checks were allowed to operate right through the human as they do in the animal world, this result would follow. Among the brutes the weaker are driven to the wall, the diseased fall out in the race of life, and the old brutes, when feeble or sickly, are killed. If men insisted that those who were sickly should be allowed to die without help of medicine or of science, if those who were weak were put upon one side and crushed, if those who were old and useless were killed, if those who were not capable of providing food for themselves were allowed to starve, if all this were done, the struggle for existence among men would be as real as it is among brutes, and would doubtless result in the production of a higher race of men; but are you willing to do that, or to allow it to be done?"

The Lord Chief Justice also said :—"I think that is a point very well worthy the serious consideration of Mr. Darwin,—whether there may result, as a consequence of the struggle for

existence among mankind, the survival of a smaller number of the strongest, or a larger number of the weaker, and whether, should it be found that the weaker survive, the race is not by that means in process of deterioration. The process might result in a few of a higher race, but the effect on the masses would be an increase of suffering and of misery."

Speaking of prostitution, Mrs. Besant quotes a passage from Mr. Montague Cookson, where he says: "If, indeed, we could all become perfect beings, the rule of life deduced by Malthus from the unalterable law of population would be both practicable and safe; as it is, it has a direct tendency to promote the cardinal vice of cities—that of unchastity. The number of women in England who ply the loathsome trade of prostitution is already large enough to people a county, and as our great thoroughfares show at nightfall, is certainly not diminishing. Their chief supporters justify themselves by the very pleas which Malthus used to enforce the duty of continence, namely, that they are not well enough off to maintain a wife and family. If they could be sure that they could limit the number of their children, so as to make it commensurate with their income, not only would the plea be generally groundless, but I believe that it would not be urged, and the so-called *social evil* would be stormed in its strongest fortress. The vice itself would become more immoral, because more without excuse, and its greater immorality would, as in the case of other offences, help to make it more rare. The world at large is only tolerant in matters relating to the sexes when the frailty of human nature makes it necessary that it should be."

Mrs. Besant mentioned that she had had a number of letters from country clergymen and town clergymen expressing pleasure that she and Mr. Bradlaugh had the courage to take up the subject, and begging them to go on with it, because of the need they saw for it.

She held that to destroy life, after it once lives, is the most immoral doctrine that can be put forward; and that when a doctor goes to a man and tells him that his wife can never bear a living child, he ought to be able also to impart to him such physiological instruction as should prevent the recurrence of the conception in future.

Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, in his speech, contended that the advocacy of *all* checks to population is lawful, except such as advise the destruction of the fœtus after conception, or of the child after birth. He contended further that the advocacy of

any checks amongst the masses, to be useful. must of necessity be put in the plainest language, in the cheapest form, and be widely spread. If it is right to advocate checks on population, it cannot be wrong to teach the poor how to apply such checks. He should abundantly show by quotations from the works of Drs. Carpenter, Grailly Hewitt, Marion Sims, and, indeed, from a perfect host of medical works on physiology and the diseases of women, that Dr. Knowlton's work was merely a medical work, written in a thoroughly scientific way. He quoted from Marion Sims and Churchill of Dublin, passages to show that they too had described methods of dealing with the most delicate points in medical science, and that no one had ventured to attack their works. There was, he contended, nothing indecent, nothing which was not warranted by the matters treated, and the defendants, who felt themselves called upon to face the issue as the advocates of checks on over-population, held that, moral or immoral as the book might be thought by others, the pamphlet stated neither more nor less than was necessary or legitimat· for the purpose. To use his own words :—"I put it to you, and I ask you to consider it carefully, that the question which you have to determine is this,—Is the advocacy of all checks to population lawful, except such as advocate the destruction of the fœtus after conception, or of the child after birth? Is it possible to teach abstinence and prudence to the poor without instructing them in the various matters of physiology which have been dealt with in this pamphlet?"

As it may be of interest to know what evidence was tendered by myself as a medical witness in this case, I will put down briefly what I said. Asked whether I had read the incriminated pamphlet, I replied, "Yes, some twenty years ago. I had always considered it an excellent little treatise, written by an able physician and competent, as well as excellent, man. Considering that it was written forty years ago, when it is thought that people did not know so much as we do—although I don't believe we are so much in advance of the men of those days—the writer must have been a profound student of physiology, and well versed in the medical science of his day." I added that, among my medical brethren in London, Sir Henry Thompson, Mr. Erichsen, Dr. Hardwicke, and Dr. Morell Mackenzie, seemed quite to agree with me in this. In reply to a question by the Lord Chief Justice, as to whether there was anything prurient in the work, I replied "Certainly not. It is an excellent little book. My profes-

sional life has been among hospitals for many years, and that has led me into contact with the poor of this city. I have been obliged to see what a miserable condition there is of squalor, utter distress, and indigence, even in this great Metropolis of the empire. I have been continually obliged to lament the excessive rapidity with which the poorer classes bring unfortunate children into the world, who, in consequence die, or grow up ricketty and weak. Such children in great numbers are seen suffering from rickets. Sir William Jenner, long physician to the Children's Hospital, has written well on the subject; and he used to say, what my experience has since confirmed, that, when a working-man marries, the first one or two children look healthy, whilst the third will be ricketty, because the mother is not able to give it the proper nourishment, which she lacks herself. The children then get more and more ricketty; and if you search the courts and alleys in London you will find great numbers of such children, whose life is simply a burden to them. Now, rickets is a very great cause of death in London among children, much greater than is generally supposed. Many children who are thought to die of measles really die from rickets. In the case of a healthy child, measles often is but of little account; but when the disease attacks a ricketty infant, the child dies, when the death is ascribed, wrongly, to measles. The death-rate is enormous where families are large among the poorer classes. One fact I will mention, to show one important point connected with infantile mortality. With all our advances in science we have not been able to make the death-rate of London lately decrease. Twenty years ago, it was 22·2 per 1000 living per annum. In 1876 it was a little higher, 22·3. So that there is no improvement. This fact might seem to be a great disgrace to the medical art, and to those who have to regulate the public health. It has indeed been asked, 'What is the use of public officers of health at all?' The real reason for the want of improvement in health is, that the children of the poor often die in infancy three times as fast as the children of the rich. Thus, Mr. Charles Ansell, actuary, found that of 100,000 children of the professional classes, only 3,000 die in the first year; whereas among the poor in cities as many as 24,000 will die. Hence, if children are born in great numbers among the poor, they are simply born to die; and it is for this reason that, as a body, we do not increase in longevity. If all were brought up that came into the world, the average age at death would be between seventy and

eighty. I have been much in France, every year for the last fifteen years, and have often noticed the very small families which are in fashion in Paris and rural districts. French statistics show that in many districts both peasants and artizans in towns limit their families to two or three children. The first check mentioned by Dr. Knowlton is used universally in France, both in Paris and all over France. In my hospital experience in London, I continually observe women suckling their infants for eighteen months or upwards to prevent another birth. This is most injurious to both mother and child. The poor mothers are often worn to death by large families, and often fall into consumption from this cause. Then, it is most common to see mothers among the poor who have had fifteen children alive, and only two or three of which survive the starvation and misery of their home. To bring so many children into the world, as many do, seems to me the very greatest social crime a person can commit; and I look on it as worse than drunkenness or other physical excess."

"Prolapse of the uterus is common among women who have many children, and who get up too soon after childbirth. Women, and not poor women alone, are continually trying to produce abortion by taking drastic purges. Abortion, I consider, is almost as bad as murder. But I confess I don't see anything wrong in preventing conception, otherwise those who remain unmarried should all be prosecuted.* Among the poor, large families are a serious cause of scarlatina and typhus fever, because so many children are crowded together in one room. I have seen six children all down with typhus in one room, with the father, mother, and another woman in the room. Over-crowding also causes sexual vice, for the young women and men are herded together in the same room. As physician to the Rescue Society's Lock Hospital, I know what a common cause poverty caused by large families and over-crowding is of prostitution. Then, in large families, the children are half-starved, and made to work too early, so that this produces pulmonary consumption when they grow up to puberty. The deaths by consumption among the poor in hospitals are one fourth of all the deaths. The rich do not die of this disease in anything like such a high proportion."

In her last speech Mrs. Besant said, "You have heard of the checks adopted by the French against over-large families, and yet you know the affection the French entertain for their

* They are thought culpable in India, according to the Hindu religion.

children; parental and filial love is one of the distinguishing features of that nation. I ask you not to put on a great people the brand of immorality for practising that which is thoroughly moral; and I beg of you that it should not be said that what is sanctioned throughout France, as a duty to society, is put down by the criminal law in England."

The Lord Chief Justice, in his charge to the jury, said :— "A century ago a great and important question of political economy was brought to the attention of the scientific and thinking world by a man whose name everybody is acquainted with, namely, Malthus. He started for the first time a theory which astonished the world, *though it is now accepted as an irrefragable truth*, and has since been adopted by economist after economist. It is, that population has a strong and marked tendency to increase faster than the means of subsistence afforded by the earth, or that the skill and industry of man can produce for the support of life. The consequence is, that the population of a country necessarily includes a vast number of persons upon whom poverty presses with a heavy and sad hand. It is true that the effects of over-population are checked to a certain extent by those powerful agencies which have been at work since the beginning of the world. Great pestilences, famine, and wars have constantly swept away thousands from the face of the earth who otherwise must have contributed to swell the numbers of mankind. The effect, however, of this tendency to increase faster than the means of subsistence leads to still more serious evils among the poorer classes of society. It necessarily lowers the price of labour by reason of the supply exceeding the demand. It increases the dearth of provisions, by making the demand greater than the supply; and produces direful consequences to a large class of persons who labour under the evils, physical and moral, of poverty. You find it, as described by a witness yesterday, in the overcrowding of our cities and country villages, and the necessarily demoralising effects resulting from that over-crowding. You have heard of the way in which women—I mean child-bearing women—are destroyed by being obliged to submit to the necessities of their position before they are fully restored from the effects of child-birth, and the effects thus produced upon the children by disease and early death.

"That these are evils—evils which, if they could be prevented, it would be the first business of human charity to prevent—there cannot be any doubt. That the evils of over-

population are real and not imaginary, no one acquainted with the state of society in the present day can possibly deny. Malthus suggested years ago—and his suggestions have been supported by economists since his time—that the only possible way of keeping down population was by retarding marriage to as late a period as possible; the argument being that the fewer the marriages the fewer would be the people. But another class of theorists say that that remedy is bad, and possibly worse than the disease; because, though you might delay marriage, you cannot restrain those instincts which are implanted in human nature, and that people will have the gratification and satisfaction of passions powerfully implanted, if not in one way, in some other way. So you have the evils of prostitution substituted for the evils of over-population. Now, what says Dr. Knowlton? There being this choice of evils—there being the unquestioned evil of over-population, which exists in a great part of the civilised world—is the remedy proposed by Malthus so doubtful that it would probably lead to greater evils than the one it is intended to remedy? Dr. Knowlton suggests—and here we come to the critical point of this inquiry—he suggests that, instead of marriage being postponed, it should be hastened. He suggests that marriage should take place in the hey-day of life, when the passions are at their highest, and that the evils of over-population shall be remedied by persons, after they have married, having recourse to artificial means to prevent the procreation of a numerous offspring, and the consequent evils, especially to the poorer classes, which the production of a too numerous offspring is certain to bring about."

After these admirable speeches of the defendants and the Lord Chief Justice, posterity will not credit the result. The jury found as follows:—"We are unanimously of opinion that the book in question is calculated to deprave public morals; but at the same time we entirely exonerate the defendants from any corrupt motives in publishing it."

This amounted to a verdict of guilty, and the jury thereby committed the terrible error of preventing, as far as in them lay, the discussion of the most vital question of modern times. It may be said in their defence, that they did not intend to punish the defendants; and that their verdict would actually have allowed them to get off without anything but the payment of costs. They did actually, however, do far more than this. They sanctioned the idea that twelve men

shall say to the rest of mankind, "You must not tell the world what you think on certain questions, however vital *you* think it to their interests that they should be instructed on the matter." Such persons should read the immortal essay on "Liberty," by John Stuart Mill, and remember, as he says, that "All silencing of discussion is assumption of infallibility."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INDIAN AND IRISH FAMINES AND THE POPULATION QUESTION.

THERE is no need for us to have recourse to the history of former centuries in order to find the check to population by famine. Nor do we require to look beyond our own Empire for the purpose of proving to those who are capable of understanding the extreme danger of any nation being contented with a very low standard of comfort. Ireland, at our doors, and India, whilst under our direction, may well make even the most conventional dissatisfied with the ordinary remedies for the evils of society. The same phenomena were apparent in both of these nations—in Ireland in 1847, and in India this very year, viz.—a vast mass of human beings accustomed, at the best of times, to bring large families into existence in the midst of extreme poverty.

In an admirable essay on "Over-Population and the Madras Famine," reprinted from a journal entitled the "Indian Representative," in 1877, the author, who is evidently well acquainted with Indian society, remarks, that the chief lesson which that famine should teach us is that there is over-population in that country. There are some people who still think that in such times of famine in India, Government should take up a portion of the rice trade, and fix prices. Such people do not see the mischief of interfering with private trade. Price depends on the demand for an article, and on the quantity of it in the market. "When the supply is less adequate than usual to the demand price rises still higher, and scarcity begins. Then it is that the poor are unable to purchase enough to eat. If the supply grows still

lower the poor become destitute, and are not able to buy at all—and that is a famine. To rail at rice-merchants, who, it is believed, are holding back grain from the market, is to do so without reason. They speculate—that is, lay out capital—and, if they profit, the time comes when they lose also."

"Madras" (continues our author) "was lately treated to a discussion on the population question in the columns of a local paper, and the paper, like a great many short-sighted people, summed up the question by saying that in England the decision had been arrived at that over-population was a chimera. The statement could not possibly have been more unfortunate, for we happen to know, because like sensible people we seek for information, that at the present moment the question is receiving more attention—and more real and honest attention—than it has ever had since the days Malthus. Two persons—Mrs. Annie Besant and Mr. Charles Bradlaugh—firm and honest believers in the doctrine of Malthus, have been persecuted and sentenced to imprisonment and fine for publishing a book about it and the physiological aspects which it presents. The Lord Chief Justice, who tried the prisoners, said the doctrine was an *irrefragable truth*. The English Press is full of the question. Scientific congresses are giving it their best attention. Great political economists are writing about it. A mighty *Malthusian League* has been formed. About a hundred petitions, praying for sanction for open discussion, have been presented to Parliament. All the great cities of England and Scotland are holding meetings of thousands of persons, and indorsing the statement that over-population is the question of the age.

"We feel that we have drawn out a terrible indictment against over-population. Let us see how our arguments tell in India. There are but two classes in India to whom the doctrines of over-population should be taught. One is the East Indian class—the other is the class composed of mahommedans and Hindoos. The Indian class is, undoubtedly, the victim of over-population; indeed, it is now a pauperised class. The general labour market is fearfully overstocked in this country, and the East Indian class is unable to compete in that market, because, from its habits of living, labour is dearer. A small section of it, therefore—the fittest to survive, according to the Darwinian idea—can live and thrive, without being dependent upon others. But the larger section, made up somewhat, as we know, from those who are *Eurasian* only in name, goes on multiplying recklessly, and the end is

that we see pauperism, crime, and worse, going on around our eyes. The State is facing a famine now. A good portion of the Eurasian population is famine-stricken. Is not the State going to take the lesson to heart? The fiat has gone forth—'Famines must be prevented.'

"Turning next to the Mahommedan class, we undoubtedly find the mischief of over-population at work. General poverty is enough to indicate this, and the case is worse than that of the East Indian, because, in very numerous instances, the Mahommedan is able to compete in the labour-market with the Hindoo, and yet he finds little or no labour. Like the East Indian, the Mahommedan is often kept alive by special means—dependency on those with an income being the chief. Had it not been for this, and had it not been for the stipends which certain Mahommedans of historical family receive, we should soon see the Mahommedans dying off, or becoming paupers or criminals in greater numbers. Superficially, the decadence of Mahommedans may be traced to idleness, pride, and other sources; but the true source is the population difficulty. They are a surplus in the labour-market, and their peculiar social institution of the harem enables them to over-populate in such a way as to make Political Economy look on aghast.

"We come, finally, to the Hindoo population, and it is in them that the mischief of over-population is exemplified to its most alarming extent. Among the Hindoos, increase has been going on in a manner the most reckless that can be imagined. Indeed, we may say that the Hindoos have strained to their very utmost the power of a population to support itself at a minimum of expense. In the terrific efforts which a Hindoo makes to live, he has given up clothing, his children go about naked, his wife wears a single strip of cloth till it falls from her body in rags, he lives on nothing but boiled rice [Malthus gives the same account of the poor Chinese labourers], and, if necessary, he goes with but one meal a day, or even starves utterly for a day or two at a time. He works for wages equivalent to four or six shillings a month.

"Indeed, there is truth in the observation that the Hindoo is always on the borderland of famine. It is pitiful, indeed, to see how the lower classes live. To the day of their death there is a struggle for food. Why should all this be? Is it not clear that mouths are abundant, and that food is scarce? And yet, in spite of the fearful lessons of

nature, the Hindu goes on multiplying exceedingly. It is a religious duty with him to get married. It is with him a religious duty to get children, as many as he can, by one wife or more, or, at all events, a son, for if he does not he must go, on his death, into everlasting damnation. He firmly believes in the patriarchal system, and keeps all his people around him, thus making his little bit of land less and less capable of maintaining him."

Mr. John Bright, in a speech at Manchester, in December, 1877, also mentioned that in our Indian Empire there are some 250,000,000 of population, and that the cost of living of a great portion of the labouring class is estimated at not more than two pounds sterling a head per annum. This is quite in accordance with the above citation, and at once discloses the main cause of Indian famines—*i.e.*, the low "standard of comfort" of the poorest classes in that ancient civilisation. Ireland alone, and perhaps Poland, among European nations, have had equally low standards of comfort; and the Irish famine was the result. Doubtless, the chief remedies for Indian famines lie in the better regulation of the land laws, and, perhaps, to some slight extent, to irrigation.

Famines are not novelties in India. They are endemic in that over-peopled country, and the wonder would be if they were not so. In former times, before the British Government ruled in India, people died unnoticed. Things are different now; but it must not be forgotten, that with the greater increase than ever of the population, famines must be more gigantic than ever, and with the means of spying into every nook and corner, and with an active Press, famines must appear to be more horrible than ever. The British Government has probably hitherto made the country more subject to famine than ever before. There have been no wars. "Infanticide, Suttee, Thuggee, and Dacoity have been put down. Property is safe, medical aid and sanitation have been offered widely to the people, and taken advantage of, and even gaols and lunatic asylums have been conducted on the most excellent principles of humanity. By all these contrivances the saving of life has, of course, been enormous. But how have they ended? The people have gone on multiplying recklessly, and as the ratio we referred to has not been kept up, nature has stopped and undone the work of years.

"It is of no use—we cannot trifle with nature; and irrigate as we may, manufacture as we may, nature will have

her reckoning in the end. We do not desire by the above, however, to see an abstention from watering the country, or an abstention from opening up the country more freely to agriculture, or an abstention from opening out fresh markets for labour. All such things are good in their way; but they will not absolutely kill the mischief of over-population. The remedy for that must ever remain in the hands of the population itself. Emigration is looked upon in many quarters as a panacea, but two essential conditions in regard to it must be secured. Better than emigration would be improved land laws, because there is room in India for a larger population." The author we above cite is too favourable to emigration, and evidently not well acquainted with the real remedy for over-fecundity—the possession of land, as in France, by the tiller of the soil. Of all remedies for over-population, according to J. S. Mill, Sismondi, and other writers on the land laws of Europe, the possession of the soil is the very best, because in that way alone can the poorest classes see clearly what they and their children have to subsist upon in the future, as well as the present moment.

THE FAMINE IN IRELAND AND THE MALTHUSIAN THEORY.

THE people of the United Kingdom have, during the course of this century, had a well-marked example of the danger of peopling down to a very low standard of comfort in the case of Ireland. The census of Ireland in 1801 showed a population of 5,395,456; in 1811, it had risen to 5,937,856; in 1821, to 6,801,827; in 1831, to 7,767,401; and in 1841, to 8,175,184. At the next census, in 1851, the population of Ireland was found to have sunk to 6,552,385; in 1861, it was 5,798,564; and in 1871, it was 5,411,416. Those who, like myself, visited that unfortunate country at the time of the famine in 1848, will never forget what it is to see a people who have become too numerous for even the scantiest subsistence to be procurable for the masses.

Mr. Henry Fawcett, whose name I am glad to cite as a strong, nay, ardent, Malthusian, has the following remark in his work on "Pauperism," page 103:—"Ireland should serve to warn us of the terrible misfortune brought upon a country by an undue increase of population. At the begin-

ning of the eighteenth century the population of that country was about 2,000,000; maintaining for the next 150 years a smaller rate of increase than is now going on in England, the 2,000,000 had grown into 8,000,000 in 1847. The country at that time became so densely peopled that a considerable portion of the nation could only obtain the barest subsistence; still nothing was done to avert the suffering that was certain to ensue. The people went on marrying with as much recklessness as if they were the first settlers in a new country, possessing a boundless area of fertile land. All the influence that could be exerted by religion prompted the continuance of habits of utter improvidence—the priests and other ministers of religion encouraged early marriages. At length there came unpropitious seasons, which are certain occasionally to recur (as in India); the potato, the staple food of the people, was diseased, and it was soon found that there were more people in the country than could be fed. A fearful famine ensued; the horrors which were endured seem now to baffle all belief; people crawled into the towns from the country districts in so emaciated a condition that they died in the streets.

Tradesmen, in some of the west and south-west parts of the country, still describe the dread with which they opened their shop-doors in the morning, having too much reason to fear that there would be two or three corpses on the threshold. In some villages more than half the people were starved to death. All this terrible suffering at length caused the fact to be generally recognised that the country was greatly overpeopled. An unprecedented exodus to the United States commenced, and in a few years the population was reduced, by the combined influence of famine and emigration, from eight millions to five and a-half millions."

Such an example at home might well make even ardent statesmen like Mr. John Bright moderate their expectations as to what the abolition of even the Corn Laws can do as an antagonist to the tendency to increase inherent in our species. Dr. T. Chalmers, writing in 1832, foretold the utter inadequacy of all such methods for increasing production of food to cope with the tendency, and was never tired of warning his countrymen in Scotland, through the medium of his lectures, how vain are all remedies for want and preventible disease which do not tend towards slackening the rate of increase, and establishing a higher standard of comfort among the classes at the base of society. It would appear that Mr.

Bright is still liable to be seduced by such plans as these, suggested by philanthropists of less experience, as he proposes irrigation as something like a panacea for the evils of such an indigent country as our unfortunate Indian possessions are at this moment. In India, as in Ireland, it is not the increase of production that is needed, but prudential restraint on families.

The great famine of Ireland led to such an exodus from the country in a few years as to have greatly raised the standard of comfort in that part of the British dominions. Doubtless, this fortunate result of the famine has been mainly due to the fact that its occurrence at length convinced the legislature of the absolute necessity, in such a desperate case, of using some really radical remedy. This has led to the alteration of the detestable customs of land tenure in Ireland; and although the standard of comfort of the Irish people seems still far too low for anything like a high state of civilisation and education to exist among the masses, it is a matter of congratulation that the terrible and chronic destitution of that country has been somewhat ameliorated.

It is a remarkable fact that, although the standard of comfort in England is higher than that of Scotland, whilst that of these two parts of the United Kingdom are both much above that of Ireland, there is, at this date, far more pauperism in England than in Scotland, and far less pauperism on the poorer land of Ireland than in either of its sister countries. The smallest amount of pauperism in England occurred just after the abolition of the Corn Laws. Since that time pauperism has frequently been very prevalent in England, mainly owing to the great laxity with which the Poor Law of 1834 has lately been carried out. The Act of 1834, unfortunately, placed no effectual check upon the granting of outdoor relief; and hence the outdoor paupers in England are often to the indoor in the proportion of about 8 to 1. This demoralises the poorer classes, and pauperises them. In Ireland, where the Poor Law was established in 1838, the indoor paupers are in the inverse ratio, *i.e.*, they are as 5 to 1 to the outdoor paupers. Fawcett ("Pauperism") calculated in 1870 that the average income per head of the population of England, Scotland, and Ireland was about £18, £13, and £5. According to this, England is more than three times, and Scotland more than twice, as wealthy as

Ireland. And yet, in wealthy England, one out of every twenty persons is often a pauper; in Scotland, one out of twenty-three, and in Ireland the proportion is only one in seventy-four.

Well might that zealous Malthusian, the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, warn his countrymen against the English Poor Law. In 1845 a new Poor Law was established in Scotland, which gave great facilities for outdoor relief. The consequence has been that, at the present time, there are, in proportion to the population, more than three times as many paupers in Scotland as in Ireland; and in the Scotch Highlands there is abundant pauperism. So that, it is clear that, in the future, the only hopes for the poorer classes of society exist in their greater prudence. All that their better educated neighbours can do for them is to see that the land tenure is a good one, and not to demoralise them by outdoor relief.