



THE CHILDREN'S HOME-FINDER.



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JULIAN M. BIRT.

THE CHILDREN'S HOME-FINDER

THE CHILDREN'S HOME-FINDER

THE STORY OF ANNIE MACPHERSON
AND LOUISA BIRT

BY
LILIAN M. BIRT

WITH FOREWORD BY
THE RIGHT HON. LORD STRATHCONA AND
MOUNT ROYAL, G.C.M.G.

AND INTRODUCTION BY
THE HON. LORD GUTHRIE

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TO
MRS. STEPHEN WILLIAMSON

TO WHOSE GENEROUS ADVOCACY
THE SHELTERING HOMES OWE SO MUCH
THIS BOOK IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

PREFACE

TO THE READER

I PLEAD guilty to the crime of adding another volume to the world's output of printed matter. In mitigation of my offence I would urge that my friend Mr. Frederick Watson (the youngest son of Ian Maclaren) incited me thereto; and I might also plead that Mrs. Stephen Williamson has been an accessory before as well as after the fact, encouraging me first to write and then to publish.

Our united excuse is that we hope this story of the way in which three sisters, Annie, Rachel, and Louisa Macpherson, "mothered" fourteen thousand children, and found for each a home and a hearty welcome in Canada, may interest the many friends through whose generous help the work grew and prospered; and may also suggest to others what a fruitful field still awaits those who will take an active interest in efforts to improve the child-life of our country.

It is well known that the life-work of these sisters was a source of inspiration to many other

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workers among children, such as Dr. Barnardo, William Quarrier, and others who, following their lead, have succeeded in placing in good Canadian homes during the last forty years a total of 70,000 children—no insignificant contribution towards the settlement of that grand Dominion.

I have great pleasure in acknowledging the invaluable help I have derived from the notes and papers so kindly placed at my disposal by the Hon. Mrs. Gordon, an intimate friend of my aunt Annie Macpherson's through many years.

To many others I owe grateful thanks for encouragement and help, and especially to Lord Guthrie for his extreme kindness and charity in helping an inexperienced writer with his advice in the midst of his very busy life.

For obvious reasons the children mentioned are given assumed names.

LILIAN M. BIRT.

LIVERPOOL SHELTERING HOMES.

FOREWORD

How to provide for the future of the orphan and destitute children of this country is a pressing question, and any means that can be devised to solve, even in part, this problem, are deserving of earnest and sympathetic consideration. Among the most effective of such means are, first, a careful preliminary training in this country, and then emigration, under proper supervision and control, to one of the great Dominions beyond the seas, where openings and opportunities for self-advancement present themselves that are not to be found in this congested country. For forty years, work of this beneficent and Christian character has been carried on by Mrs. Birt, whose praiseworthy efforts in the cause of the children deserve well of the community. A great number of children have, through her agency, been sent to Canada with happy results. I trust that she may be spared for many years to carry on her good work, and earnestly wish her God-speed in it.

25th January 1913.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "W. A. McCreone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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INTRODUCTION

I WRITE this Introduction with peculiar pleasure. The work specially associated with the names of Miss Macpherson and Mrs. Birt has been well known to everyone interested in the poor children of our cities since 1870, when they opened the Home of Industry in London, and two years later the “Sheltering Home” in Liverpool, for receiving and training neglected and destitute children, *en route* for Canada. My brother-in-law, the late Mr. Stephen Williamson, was the first Chairman of the Liverpool Committee; his name and that of my sister often occur in these pages.

In addition, the duties of a Criminal Judge compel attention to all institutions for the salvation of destitute and neglected children. Their admitted results prove, beyond all possibility of doubt, that, valuable as are the new methods of criminal treatment—reformative and deterrent,

rather than punitive—and urgent as the need is for the development and increased adoption of these methods, it will ever remain true (in all senses, including cost) that Prevention is better than Cure.

Miss Birt's book is a simple but moving record of lasting achievement, for God and man, of two notable Scotswomen. Miss Annie Macpherson was her aunt, and Mrs. Birt (Louisa Macpherson) is her mother. There are many notices also of their admirable sister, Rachel (Mrs. Merry). Of the three sisters, Mrs. Birt alone survives.

In its earlier pages, this volume contains interesting details of all kinds of Home and Mission work in London, and among the coprolite fossil diggers in Cambridgeshire. But, as its title—"The Children's Home-Finder"—indicates, the book is mainly concerned with the efforts of Miss Macpherson and Mrs. Birt to provide homes and careers in Canada for homeless English children. Like most reformers, their life-work was not the result of any early, long-premeditated scheme. It grew, and was diverted into unthought-of channels. Mission work in country districts led to Mission work in London. There the motherly hearts of these ladies were

moved to indignation ; their spirit was stirred within them as they beheld the cruelly sweated labour of the little matchbox-makers, mere children, ignorant of the commonest joys of childhood, stunted and prematurely aged in body and soul from excessive toil, insufficient food, scanty clothing, and foul air. It was work among these little matchbox-makers, for whom they founded in London what they called "The Revival Homes" and "The Home of Industry," which led Miss Macpherson and Mrs. Birt to the conviction that, at least for many neglected children, emigration is the only effective remedy.

In 1870, after a long apprenticeship in Christian and philanthropic work, the operations began by which, during succeeding years, these ladies were enabled to find good homes and useful careers in Canada for 14,000 of England's necessitous children—orphans, or worse. With that work their names will be imperishably associated.

They were not dowered with rank, or learning, or wealth ; and their intellectual abilities, although outstanding, were not so transcendent as to make them impossible models for ordinary mortals. Yet they were both remarkable women ; each

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with a personality arresting attention to their cause, and commanding the sympathy and support of people of all classes and sects, and each with faith to remove mountains.

They did Imperial service. Their work was thrice blessed: to the children, to England and to Canada. After a training in the Sheltering Homes, Canada afforded these boys and girls what, in the great majority of cases, they could not have had in their own mother country—the opportunity, under firm and kindly guardianship, of becoming God-fearing, self-respecting, and law-abiding citizens. Not long ago in Glasgow, although I did not doubt its truth, I had to reject an old convict's only plea: "My Lord, I never had a chance." And in Edinburgh, some years ago, when the police told a boy of twelve, whose casual earnings were the main support of a drunken mother and a little sister, that his mother had fallen down a stair and broken her neck, this was his dreadful rejoinder (don't judge the child too hardly): "Jeannie and me will hae a chance noo!"

Miss Macpherson and Mrs. Birt, strong Evangelicals, with a profound belief in the regenerating power of the Gospel, were equally alive to

the humanising influence of education and the steadying effect of regular work. Their success, even with very unlikely material, convinced them of the justice of my father's retort to a Colonial Attorney-General, many years ago, at a great meeting in London, before work for destitute children was properly understood. The Attorney-General objected to British philanthropy sending what he called the "off-scourings" of our cities to pollute Colonial shores. "Off-scourings!" said my father, snatching up a sheet of paper from the chairman's table. "Off-scourings! Does the learned gentleman know what this snow-white paper is made of? If he does not, will he henceforward abandon its use when I tell him that it has been cleansed and purified, fit for a king's palace, from the filthiest Russian rags?"

This prejudice affected the people in the Colonies and the Home and Colonial Governments, and it was not removed in a day. No one did more to overcome it than Miss Macpherson and Mrs. Birt. Perhaps men could not have done it so quickly. But these women's powers of persuasion and their winning tactfulness induced the Canadians to allow the experiment to be made; and their careful selection

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of suitable boys and girls, the admirable training received in the London and Liverpool Homes, and the discrimination shown in planting them with suitable Canadian foster-parents, secured results which made objection impossible. In the end, as Miss Birt shows, Canada passed from doubt, if not opposition, to tolerance, and from tolerance to enthusiastic approval. The people and the Government began by asking, How many of these waifs *must* you send? They ended by demanding, How many boys and girls can you possibly give us?

Not least instructive and stimulating is the story of how the work was financed. In every department, finance as well as training, the ladies were imbued with unwavering optimism. They believed in the power of prayer and in God's fidelity to His promises. They even believed in average human nature, when fully but not over employed, with rational relaxation for leisure hours and holidays, and, last but not least, with plenty to eat and nothing alcoholic to drink. They found out long ago—what people are only now beginning to appreciate—that destitution and idleness are at the root of most of our social problems, including drunkenness and crime.

Further, they believed in the readiness of large-hearted men and women to support capable and disinterested workers in any scheme, on business lines, for the benefit of the coming generation. They were idealists, Utopians, if you like ; for all true reformers, however much they accomplish, die hoping and praying for more. But they were also shrewd women of business. They took care to put the finances of their whole operations into the hands of leading laymen in London and Liverpool—men like Mr. Alexander Balfour, Sir Arthur Blackwood, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. R. C. Morgan, Mr. J. E. Mathieson, Mr. Stephen Williamson, and others, many of whom I had the honour to know.

This book is a worthy memorial of Miss Macpherson and Mrs. Birt. But it will fail of its object, if it does not stir up public interest and secure increased support for the noble work, still in successful operation and as necessary as ever, which they founded, and stimulated others elsewhere to found, more than forty years ago.

CHARLES J. GUTHRIE.

13 ROYAL CIRCUS,
EDINBURGH.

Just as this book is passing through the Press we have received the sad news that the Knowlton Home, Canada, was burnt on 17th February.

CHAPTER I
BIOGRAPHICAL

“ With mercy and with judgment,
My web of time He wove,
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lusted by His love.
I'll bless the Hand that guided,
I'll bless the Heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.”

“ O, what owe I to the file, the hammer, to the furnace of
my Lord Jesus !

“ I should twenty times have perished in my affliction, if
I had not leaned my weak back and laid my pressing burden
both upon the Stone laid in Zion.

“ Having Him, though my cross were as heavy as ten
mountains of iron, when He putteth His sweet shoulder under
me and it, my cross is but a feather.

“ And if twenty crosses be written for you in God's book,
they will come to nineteen and then at last to one, and after
that nothing but your head on Christ's breast for evermore,
and His own soft hand to dry your face and wipe away
your tears.”

S. RUTHERFORD.

The Children's Home-Finder

CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHICAL

BORN in Campsie, by Milton, Stirlingshire, Annie Parlane Macpherson was the eldest, Rachel Stuart the second, and Louisa Caroline Stirling the youngest of a family of seven.

Their father, James Macpherson, came of the Highland clan of that name. His forbears had been farmers and small landowners in Stirlingshire.

Their mother, Helen Edwards, belonged to a family of Norse descent, who settled like so many other Scandinavians on the east coast of Scotland near Stonehaven. John Edwards, her brother, was a college friend of James Macpherson's in Glasgow, and the intimacy resulted in Helen Edwards' marriage to her brother's friend.

Both young men were seriously-minded, but

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while John Edwards entered the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, James Macpherson, who was a member of the Society of Friends, became a teacher, a calling in which he displayed peculiar gifts and originality of mind. He was a student of Pestalozzi and Froebel, and was invited by Ada, Lady Lovelace (daughter of Lord Byron), to come to England to establish schools in the neighbourhood of her estate. In these schools nature study and industrial training in manual and outdoor pursuits were combined with the usual school routine.

In temperance work among the young, Mr. Macpherson was an enthusiast.

That he was an attractive and interesting speaker to children is borne witness to by an old lady still living, who remembers Mr. Macpherson, accompanied by his daughter Annie, coming to the public school at Kettering, Northampton, which this lady attended as a child, and speaking to the children in a way she had never heard before. Up to that time she had never heard or thought of God but as a dreadful all-powerful Being, waiting to punish naughty people, but Mr. Macpherson spoke to them of God as the Friend of little children who loved them and



*Yours, a friend of neglected children
Annie Macpherson -*

liked to see them at play as well as at prayer. This presentation of God as a Father, more loving than any earthly one, she never forgot.

Annie was educated in Glasgow ; later on she was sent to classes at the Home and Colonial Training College, then in Gray's Inn Road, London ; the training in Froebel's methods received there proved of great assistance when she came to grips with the London waif with his perplexing traits and impulses, his intellectual sharpness and his moral bluntness.

In all the youthful experiences of the sisters, one traces the thread of preparation for the life-work before them.

With a heart bigger than her own family circle the mother took in two orphans to foster and rear. The quick-witted girls did not fail to notice the equal footing enjoyed by the stranger children and the tenderness with which they were treated. The sisterly fostering of the orphans was a providential training in Christian philanthropy. Little did their mother know what she was doing when she took the orphans to her bosom. She only thought to make a happy home and a bright future for the hapless pair, but in effect she was preparing a

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home and a hearty welcome for thousands of the poorest children on God's earth.

Mr. Macpherson died in 1851, leaving to Annie the care of her widowed mother and the younger ones at home. Louisa, then only eleven, thus became the special charge of her eldest sister and owed much to her influence. Annie had a very tender affection for her youngest sister, and the tie between them was very close, particularly in the closing years of Annie's life when they corresponded nearly every day.

The only surviving and dearly loved younger brother ran away to sea and was never heard of more. This sorrow kept their hearts ever tender to all wanderers, enabling them to see in every lost boy their beloved brother.

Rachel the second sister married, in 1852, Mr. Joseph Merry, a farmer in Cambridgeshire, where she spent her early married life, gaining experience in the round of country pursuits which devolve on a farmer's wife, and also considerable knowledge of boy nature while rearing her family of four sons.

Louisa married in 1858, at the age of seventeen, Mr. Charles Henry Birt, a merchant in the city of London. The young couple lived at a pretty country house, Woodford Lodge, in

Essex. Louisa was a gay, lively girl, very musical, with a beautiful voice and great capacity for making friends. But trial soon subdued, though it never quenched that bright spirit. Her two eldest children died, and shortly afterwards her husband met with a severe railway accident which rendered him a nervous invalid. The young couple went abroad in the hope that a change of scene and air would prove beneficial. Unfortunately this hope was not fulfilled.

The strain of nursing had told so heavily on Mrs. Birt's health, that when she returned home in 1869 the doctors feared the worst. Her heart had become affected by an attack of rheumatic fever and malaria. Contrary to expectation, however, after a winter at St. Leonards, she recovered somewhat; and to please her sisters went down to the East End to do what little she could to aid in the work which they had started in Bethnal Green. Her first effort was to sing to the Sewing Class of old widows, and, as her sisters had hoped, in endeavouring to do something for others she got cheer and comfort for herself, and proved the truth of the wise man's words: "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

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EARLY IMPRESSIONS

“Perchance in Heaven one day to me
Some blessed saint will come and say,
‘All hail! beloved, but for thee
My soul to death had fallen a prey,’
And oh! what rapture in the thought,
One soul to glory I have brought.”

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

The sisters had enjoyed from their childhood all the influences of a Christian home, but when Annie was nineteen years of age a word spoken by a friend was the vehicle of a divine message to her soul.

She realised the love of God to her personally as a divine revelation, and a flame was kindled in her heart of love for God which became the ruling and impelling force of her life. From the feeble starlight of natural sympathies she passed into the clear day of Christian affections, and she learned the great secret of joy and power in self-sacrifice.

A hundred lessons and practical illustrations given her by both her parents were suddenly lighted up with a new meaning and clothed with a beauty she had not hitherto seen.

From that hour she began to work for Christ

with an enthusiasm that deepened as she grew in experience and character.

WORK AMONG THE COPROLITE DIGGERS AT EVERS DEN

After Louisa's marriage to Mr. Birt, Annie and her mother resided for some time near Mrs. Merry, in the village of Eversden in Cambridgeshire. Here Annie availed herself of the opportunities for quiet service presented to her in the humble routine of Sunday School and Bible Class, and in visiting the cottagers. Opportunities improved lead to larger service, and Annie was thus prepared for the future ministry to thousands.

Just at this time the discovery was made that the fossils embedded in the clay soil of that neighbourhood formed, when ground to powder, a valuable manure for the land. Within a week about five hundred rough miners and labourers poured into the quiet little villages, and the pressing need was felt of efforts to civilise and evangelise these men, not only for their own sakes, but to save the rustics of the villages from the contamination brought about

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by the drunken and loose habits of these invaders of their peace, and the immorality induced by the absence of any provision for lodging and sleeping accommodation for this unexpected addition to the countryside.

It was not easy for a timid woman to approach these rough characters, and at first Annie Macpherson's efforts to distribute tracts and invite the men to Church or Mission Hall were received with sneers and scoffing.

Often would she spend hours in prayer before she could get courage to approach a gang of men or even say a word to one apart. Gradually, however, she and other like-minded friends won a hearing and a quiet influence among them, though for a season their efforts seemed to meet with little success.

A visit to London at this period proved a turning point in her life. She was taken by a friend to hear Mr. Reginald Radcliffe (a Liverpool solicitor), who was giving evangelistic addresses in the Shoreditch Theatre to the East End masses.

In 1859 the Spirit of God seemed poured forth on the land from North to South and from East to West. Not only were churches of all denominations quickened and revived, their eyes

opened to the work to be done, and their forces strengthened to perform it, but thousands of lay-people and women of every class were stirred to their depths and impelled by the force of a new affection and devotion to Jesus Christ as their Saviour to carry out His commands, as expressed in the Gospels, far more literally and energetically than had been attempted since the days of St. Francis of Assisi. Reginald Radcliffe was one of a number of laymen who were used as preachers in that gracious revival.

It was Reginald Radcliffe who gave the spur and incentive that was needed to thrust Annie Macpherson out into the great harvest-field of souls. From that time she lived for one main object; even her overflowing love for children and burning desire to help the poor and suffering were subordinate to this one purpose: To bring souls into God's Kingdom.

Annie Macpherson herself gave the following account of this experience:

“Well do I remember the first time of meeting Mr. Radcliffe, about 1861. As a reader of the paper called *The Revival*, my attention was drawn to a notice of a service to be held in the City of London Theatre by Reginald Radcliffe and Richard Weaver. The notice stated that there

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would be an after-meeting. My great desire was to see how such a meeting was conducted. I had not the slightest thought that this would open up a way by which my life could be spent in serving and helping little children in London.

“As my guide led me into the stream of lowly, poor, ill-clad people struggling with such earnestness to get into this strange place for the preaching of the Gospel, my whole being was filled with joy never known before. My guide could not join such ‘riff-raff,’ and we parted. I found a seat in the pit. On the stage the two good men soon appeared, and eleven others followed.

“Mr. Radcliffe began the service by a tender, heartfelt prayer, which stilled the thousands gathered; then a rousing hymn,

‘Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away,’

was led by Richard Weaver. More prayer followed, and another joyous hymn with a chorus.

“Everything was so strange and so solemn. The two men on the stage seemed awfully in earnest. Richard Weaver preached for twenty minutes, then Reginald Radcliffe seemed to skip over the seats like a hart, setting every

Christian to work to speak to the unsaved who were crying for mercy around them. Although I was a stranger, Miss Radcliffe found out that I loved the Lord, and drew her brother's attention to me; in a few words he urged me to speak to a crowd of women gathered round his sister, whose voice had failed. But how could I dare to speak to others without special preparation?

"Again this wondrous man drew near, all aglow with the power of the Holy Ghost. Still my lips were sealed, and his sister held my hand in hers as she breathed an earnest prayer for my deliverance. Praise be to God, the enemy's spell was broken, and the fear of man which worketh a snare removed in the presence of sin-stricken souls. From that good hour revival work has ever been my greatest joy."

A new power was soon evidenced in Annie Macpherson's work among the coprolite diggers. Clubs, coffee-rooms, evening classes, prayer meetings and mission services were carried on, not only in the evenings but at the dinner hour, in barns if no other place was available, or in the open fields.

Many Cambridge undergraduates took part. At first the speakers were always men; it was

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unthought of that a woman should speak publicly. Indeed it is hard nowadays to realise all that women then had to contend with before they could attempt any public work, and Annie Macpherson had to the full the womanly shrinking of her sex from publicity. Miss Ellice Hopkins, whose father was a distinguished mathematical tutor at Cambridge, came over to address the gatherings of coprolite diggers and villagers, and perhaps it was her example that encouraged Annie Macpherson to begin to speak in public.

Ere Annie Macpherson left Cambridgeshire the fossil strata had been almost worked out in that immediate neighbourhood, so that only the labour of the regular population was required, but the results of her efforts were far-reaching. A temperate, united band of pious young men had been gathered out, full of simple earnestness, each seeking to work for God according to his measure of light, time, and talents.

Among other converts of those Cambridgeshire days one, the Rev. Frank M. Smith, became a noted Baptist minister, and another, Mr. W. Rudland, for forty-five years has laboured as a missionary in China.

The Rev. Frank M. Smith writes: "My

knowledge of Annie Macpherson dates back to the beginning of the Cambridgeshire Mission among the coprolite diggers in the early 'sixties.

“Her appearance in the villages was the beginning of a new era; and while Eversden was at first the centre of her work—aided by her sister, Mrs. Merry and her husband, Mr. Joseph Merry—the whole countryside was soon aroused and influenced; while village life was transformed. Her personality was more than magnetic. How we all loved her; and looking back on those days, one thinks of what it must have been

‘WITH HIM IN GALILEE.’

“There were many brought to the Lord. I as a lad of about sixteen was one of them. I also was one of the band invited to London by Annie Macpherson to the Mildmay Conference, volunteered for China, was accepted by Hudson Taylor for the first party to sail in the *Lammermuir*, but was not passed by the doctor as it was feared I might be consumptive. I felt however that I must preach—went back to the villages, took up the work as best I could—preached often in every village for miles around, and everywhere God owned the message. In my own village, Kingston, there were many of all ages

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and conditions converted, who became Christian workers in the churches. Annie Macpherson had by this time introduced me to Mr. Spurgeon, and I entered the Pastor's College. Since then 'what hath God wrought?' During these forty years over a thousand have been received by me into Christian fellowship. I have four sons in the ministry and three daughters engaged in missionary work. Why do I mention these things here? Simply to say that I trace it all to the work of Annie Macpherson in the villages of Cambridgeshire, where by her instrumentality the Lord found me and saved me, and but for her this might never have been.

“FRANK M. SMITH.”

William Rudland was the village blacksmith, and had been the cause of much anxiety to his mother. He avoided all attempts to reach him, and when he saw Miss Macpherson coming down the village street he would dart out at the back door of the cottage. But she and the mother pleaded in prayer for him, and at last his heart was won. Soon after Miss Macpherson removed to London she invited her Bible Class of young men from Eversden to spend a few days with her for the Mildmay Conference. When they arrived

one was missing. She asked, "Where is Willie?" and they replied that he sent his best thanks for her kindness but he could not leave his work, and that with every stroke on the anvil he was crying, "A million a month in China dying without God! O Lord, send me," and by toiling hard he hoped to get the means to go.

Happening to mention this incident before Mr. Hudson Taylor (founder of the "China Inland Mission"), he asked: "Where is that young man? Send him up to me for a week." So William came to London and never returned to the forge, but sailed with a party of missionaries to China in the *Lammermuir* in 1865.

He translated the New Testament into the colloquial language of his parish of 8,000,000 souls, and prepared a dictionary of the local dialect, which has been of great service to later missionaries. He trained many Chinese converts as preachers and helpers, and had all but completed the translation of the Old Testament at the time of his death in January 1912. Mr. Rudland attended the Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, and was made an honorary member of the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society in recognition of his services in the translation of the Bible.

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Another step in the preparation for the sisters' life-work was taken in 1866 when Annie Macpherson accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Merry on a visit to relatives in America. This journey enabled her to realise the opportunities which the New World held for the workless masses of the East End. She also visited several institutions in New York for the erring, the orphan and the friendless, and saw how greatly women were being led out into useful service in social and religious efforts, and she learned much from their executive ability and wise expenditure of time and money, and their unity of action.

A sketch of her experiences on this voyage may render travellers in these days thankful for the speed, safety, and luxury they now enjoy.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Miss Macpherson had no responsibility for the emigrants on this vessel, but the description in her letter sufficiently shows the contrast between the class who were emigrating in those days and the fine class who are going to Canada and Australia at present.

The voyage occupied two months from October 24th,

“SHIP *Caroline*,
“December 24, 1866.

“We often had earnestly to ask the Lord to overrule our want of wisdom in coming by a sailing vessel at this time of the year. She proved overladen. Light winds did not affect her; during the first month we had glorious days of sunshine. But the latter 1000 miles of our journey were marked by the trials attendant on an overladen, leaky vessel not overstocked with sails, food, or water.

“We had on board 100 emigrants of all nations, not a few Whitechapel roughs, some recently out of prison, several of the vilest and lowest that can be imagined.

“The half-fed emigrants broke into the cargo, getting fearfully drunk with London porter, threatening a mutiny. Their pistols were locked up by the officers, and a band of them were handcuffed. Often in the midnight hour the sea would come rushing into our cabins, several of the boats were washed away, the bulwarks stove in, the sailors telling us that humanly speaking the vessel could not stand another gale. The last week our provisions had been

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chiefly salted meat and our last tank of water had shipped the sea, and even this we had on short allowance. The water made most of us ill, and laid low my little niece and Mrs. Merry's darling baby boy with typhus fever. There was no doctor on board, no nourishing food for them, nothing but salted water, the sea rolling in on us, everything wet, no means of drying, everybody engaged in holding on for safety. Three times we tried to comfort mourning mothers as their little ones were committed to the deep.

“On Sunday, December 23rd, every trial reached its height; boils had broken out on officers and crew, diphtheria among the foreigners, many were disabled among the emigrants, robbing was going on in mysterious ways. A band of fierce Irishmen lay manacled over our heads. When the light broke the sea went down, the wind calmed. Then a shout from stem to stern was heard: ‘Land! Land!’ and ere long—oh! joy to relate—‘A sail! a pilot boat!’”

CHAPTER II
CONDITION OF LONDON IN 1865-69

WHAT CHRIST SAID

“ I said, ‘ Let us walk in the fields.’
He said, ‘ No, walk in the town.’
I said, ‘ There are no flowers there.’
He said, ‘ No flowers, but a crown.’

I said, ‘ But the skies are black ;
There is nothing but noise and din.’
And He wept as He sent me back ;
‘ There is more,’ he said, ‘ there is sin.’

I said, ‘ But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun.’
He answered, ‘ Yet souls are sick,
And souls in the dark undone.’

I said, ‘ I shall miss the light,
And friends will miss me, they say.’
He answered me, ‘ Choose to-night
If I am to miss you, or they.’

I pleaded for time to be given.
He said, ‘ Is it hard to decide ?
It will not seem hard in heaven
To have followed the steps of your Guide.’ ”

GEORGE MACDONALD.

CHAPTER II

CONDITION OF LONDON IN 1865-69

IN 1865 Annie Macpherson removed with her mother to London. The City, its sins and sorrows, at once called forth her sympathies, and she was soon seeking some way to alleviate the misery and ignorance which appalled her.

At that period the East End was a gloomy district of over a million people, who dwelt in indescribable slums and worked incredibly long hours for starvation pay.

Since the industrial revolution of the early nineteenth century, thousands who had previously gained their living in the country in cottage industries or agricultural labour had been swept into the vortex of city life. Neither municipalities nor employers of labour had taken sufficient steps to provide decent accommodation for the ever-increasing town population. Wherever old dwellings were pulled down, lofty warehouses took their place, and the congestion became yet

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more acute. The building of the Great Eastern Railway's Goods Station displaced thousands of poor from their dwellings, for whom no provision was made.

The people sought relief from the crushing misery of their lives in drink and vicious courses, or the excitement of crime. No temperance coffee-house had even been heard of. No railways had then been constructed by which visitors could cross London from the north and west to the east.

Scarcely one well-to-do person with time or money to spare was to be found living in the district able to assist the churches or the poor.

Free education did not exist. The relief of the poor was ill administered, often in the hands of arbitrary coarse men, and altogether inadequate. One shilling a week was the usual outdoor relief on which aged people or widows were expected to maintain life.

Consumption was rife, and swept away whole families underfed and shockingly housed.

Smallpox was very common. Miss Macpherson visited one room where a man's eight children were all suffering from it, while in the same room

he himself was weaving white chenille fringe of an expensive description for sale in West End shops. Nothing was being done for the children in the way of isolation or medical treatment, except that the father had rubbed some oil on their faces because he had been told that was good for smallpox.

The mortality among children was frightful. Indeed we find in Annie Macpherson's *Journal* the following sentences :

“We can but be deeply thankful that in parts of the East End four out of every five infants die before they reach their fifth year, because the other side of the picture among the living ones is so black, so awful, so crushing in its dreadful realities. For, wiser in their generation than the children of light, the sons of darkness seize upon the young, and bring their evil influences to bear upon the formation of character of the youngest of these little ones.

“While yet in their mothers' arms gin is poured down their infant throats, and a little later as a natural consequence childish voices beg for coppers to be spent in drink. Alas! no uncommon sight is it to see little girls of ten years old reeling drunk along the streets.”

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Mr. George Holland, who laboured in his "Ragged School" among the children for years, mentions the case of a boy who was twenty times drunk while under seven years of age; he was later on sent to penal servitude.

In addition to the terrible physical plight of these poor children, their moral condition was even more appalling.

The badly lit streets, the filthy condition of the courts and alleys, the unlimited facilities for drink, led to the vices which love the darkness. Certain streets were altogether given up to thieves' lodgings and other dens of iniquity where many a Fagin trained the youthful denizens to steal. Over 3000 thieves lived around the quarters of the Home of Industry when Miss Macpherson began her work there. Even the police did not dare to venture singly down these streets, and many an unwary stranger who did so has been hustled into a house, and before he realised what was happening has been robbed and left naked, to get out of the predicament as best he could. This actually happened to one of Miss Macpherson's Councillors.

In this dark mass of poverty a few women of position and culture had been endeavouring

to bring what relief and hope they could to the East End heathen. Among these ladies were Lady Rowley, the Hon. Mrs. Hobart, Miss Ellen Logan, and Miss Clara M. S. Lowe.

Lady Rowley and her cousin Miss Clara Lowe were the friends who showed Annie Macpherson the courts and alleys where work was most needed, and set her to work visiting and distributing tracts from house to house and assisting with the Mothers' Meetings they had gathered in various small rooms.

Lady Rowley had passed through the furnace of affliction herself. Wealthy, beautiful, and happily married, she became a great invalid after the death of her only child, and was drawn about in a bath-chair. As she in some degree recovered health she encountered a crushing blow in the death of her husband. During the first few months of her widowhood she began to visit St. Mary's Hospital and among the poor. In 1860 Reginald Radcliffe became her guest during the time he was preaching at the Shoreditch Theatre, and on leaving London wrote to her :

“Now the poor East of London! do not let the West neglect it. It does not so much want more buildings—of these there are enough de-

served, some shut—but more living, loving labourers!”

His last prayer in her house was that she might “Feed the lambs in the East of London.”

Lady Rowley devoted her large means to the Master's cause. Among other charities she opened a Young Women's Christian Association and Home in Spital Square. She would often spend from Saturday to Monday there among the young women, holding classes and prayer meetings. Her appearance was always extremely attractive and remarkable for its delicacy and refinement. On her deathbed she said to her cousin, Miss Lowe, “I leave the work in the East End to you.”

In the same spirit of consecration Miss Clara M. Lowe, daughter of Sir Hudson Lowe (Governor of St. Helena during Napoleon's captivity), devoted her life to the poor East End girls, living among them in a room as bare as any convent cell.

Miss Lowe had been educated in London and Paris and presented at Court. It was supposed she would lead the usual life of a Society lady. At the time of her preparation for confirmation



MISS LOWE

something intervened—we do not know what—but the deep impression she owed to her cousin's influence remained.

After Lady Rowley's death Miss Lowe spent most of her time in the Home they had opened for girls in Spitalfields. She shrank from no service, however lowly, to the sick and dying whom she visited.

During the cholera epidemics she followed doctor and nurses from house to house, administering comfort to the dying and food and encouragement to the living, as well as caring for the orphans who were left desolate. Miss Lowe was thoroughly practical; she spent a year in Canada in order to see for herself Annie Macpherson's emigration work, of which she wrote an interesting account. During the Franco-German war she went to nurse and take spiritual comfort to the wounded soldiers.

She had often wished to be a missionary to India, and in her old age her desire was granted. Hearing that an elder lady's presence would be of advantage to chaperon a young missionary, she accompanied Miss Reade who was going to take charge of the Punrooty Mission, and remained three years in India, in spite of delicate

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health and failing sight. When Miss Macpherson called together a meeting of ladies to listen to Miss Ellice Hopkins and to form a little association for visiting in the worst houses in Ratcliffe Highway, Miss Lowe was the first to offer to initiate any who might volunteer to visit the terrible dens which abounded in that district. Knowing as she did every court and alley, and being so gentle and so perfectly well-bred, she never gave offence, and secured an entrance where many others would have failed. She passed away in 1904 at the age of eighty-five, leaving to all who came within her gentle influence the memory of a sweet life of devotion and sacrifice.

THE PESTILENCE, FAMINE, AND DISTRESS OF 1866-67-68

Miss Lowe has left a graphic description of the terrible cholera epidemic which raged in London in the summer of 1866 :

“ In the first week of July there were fourteen cases, in the third week 346 fatal cases occurred, 308 of which were in the East End. In the second week of August there were 1407 deaths. The want of nourishing food made the poor an easy prey, vast numbers were attacked

and laid low, and great debility and weakness ensued. The infected bedding was burned in the streets, and children playing round the bon-fires were often stricken with the disease.

“In one house, from which the mother had just been buried, the children had been removed to a wood-shed for safety. One child lay dying on a poor pallet, and when this child breathed its last another sickened and took its place, but for want of bedding and covering he had not been undressed for days. A blanket was borrowed, and in this he was carried to the Hospital to die. Upstairs an aged man of seventy-five was sinking fast. In one corner lay the dead body of his daughter; by his side sat his helpless wife. She had been in the Hospital with a broken leg, but had been removed to make room for cholera patients. In the next room a young widow was almost hopelessly watching her only child, and beside her sat her paralysed mother, for whose support she received from the Parish a shilling and a loaf weekly.

“In one court the sights and sounds reminded one of that time when there was a great cry ‘for there was not a house where there was not

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one dead.' One poor woman had been called away to see a dying mother, and on her return found her child already numbered with the dead. Another mother of five children had just had the dead body of her husband carried in.

"In a cellar lay a strong man in the prime of life tossing about in agony. 'Let me rest,' were the only words he had spoken. On a second visit he was dead.

"Close by a woman was frantically running for a remedy for a friend just seized. In this case the terror of death and the agony of body were all as nothing compared to the grief of being taken from her only little girl. The cries for 'Water, water! My child, my baby!' were heart-rending."

It was in the company of her friend Miss Lowe that Annie Macpherson was first introduced to what might be termed the child-slavery of the East End of London; and during that winter she published in a booklet entitled *The Little Matchbox-Makers* a touching account of childhood's sorrows, which led to very practical help being given. In this booklet she wrote :

"It was high up a winding stair, in an attic

in a narrow lane, that the first group of pale-faced little matchbox-makers were found.

“They were hired by the woman who rented the room; the children received just three farthings for making a gross of boxes; 288 pieces of wood in each gross had to be bent, sanded, and covered with paper. The wood and paper were furnished to the woman, and she received twopence-halfpenny per gross, but had to pay the children and provide paste and the firing to dry the work.

“Every possible spot, on the bed, under the bed, was strewn with the drying boxes. A loaf of bread and a knife stood on the table ready for these little ones to be supplied with a slice in exchange for their hard-earned farthings.

“This touching scene gave a lasting impression of childhood’s sorrows; never a moment for school or play, but ceaseless toil from light till dark.

“Even the nursling, scarce out of its mother’s arms, sits pasting the sand-papers on the boxes, for this early practice is considered necessary to produce quick fingering in days to come. Children from eight to ten years of age are generally the swiftest box-makers; the most

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expert worker known to me can earn 4s. 6d. weekly, but the amount even of her earnings is very irregular. Her mother and the younger ones help.

"In one house I saw, assisting her poor invalid mother with the work, a girl of fifteen, who had begun by earning a penny a week when four years old and had been incessantly occupied ever since. Time could not be spared for learning to read or write, but with fingers damp from pasting, and then torn with pressing down the sand-paper, she laboured on from year to year.

"I have seen a woman whose thumb was worn to the bone, caused by the friction of putting on the sand-papers, and tiny children who could not speak plainly, with fingers raw and blistered from the same cause.

"The other day I took upon my knees a little girl of four years old. Her mother said the child had earned her own living ever since she was three. The infant now makes several hundred boxes every day of her life, and her earnings suffice to pay the rent of the miserable room which the family inhabits. The poor little woman, as might be expected, is grave and

sad beyond her years ; she has none of a child's vivacity, she does not seem to know what play means. All her thoughts are centred in the eternal round of lucifer-box making, in which her whole life is passed. She has never been beyond the dingy street in which she was born. She has never so much as seen a tree, or a daisy, or a blade of grass. A poor, sickly little thing, and yet a sweet, obedient child ; the deadly pallor of her face proclaiming unmistakably that she will soon be mercifully taken away to a better world, where at last the weary little fingers shall be at rest."

THE FIRST TEA-PARTY

This touching description of the little match-box-makers moved the heart of some benevolent person with a very practical thought.

One pound was sent to the office of *The Revival*,¹ with the wish that it might be applied towards a tea-meeting "for the poor little children of Bethnal Green who toil to get their living and die old at an early age." In searching for the matchbox-makers in cellars and garrets, over

¹ Since called *The Christian*.

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thirteen hundred were found as guests, and funds never failed till all were regaled.

Miss Lowe wrote: "It is scarcely possible to imagine a more touching sight than some of them presented; their ages were six to fourteen, some were younger, two not yet four years old. With a full knowledge of the facts it yet seemed scarcely possible to realise that the little baby hand, which stole so confidently within my own, had been that morning working for its daily bread; and that another apparently helpless little one lying in my arms, overwhelmed with sleep amidst all the uproar of delight of the elder ones, could, as her mother expressed it, 'make boxes against anyone.' But the saddest sight of all was that of a dear child of six with a broken spine. He is compelled to kneel to his work, which consists of putting sand-paper on the boxes, and his sister said they often cried to see him, both then and after when in bed, resting on his knees.

"It was most touching to see the tenderness of elder brothers and sisters over the younger ones. One dear boy, during tea, called Miss Macpherson to him, saying, 'Would you be angry if I took this piece of bread and butter to my baby?'

By the time a piece of paper was procured to wrap it in, a piece of cake had been distributed to each. Then a host of hands went up for paper to carry it home to 'my mother' or 'my baby.' They were enjoined to eat it, for another piece of cake would be given them on leaving to carry home."

It was the sight of children such as these that roused all her intense mother nature, and made Annie Macpherson resolve to give herself to the work of rescuing these helpless ones from the wretchedness to which they seemed doomed. She began holding classes at night to teach them, providing a meal as inducement to come in. Sometimes she held an auction of second-hand clothing which the poor mothers would buy for their children ; or give lectures on the use of soap and water, selling penny towels. She said that her aim was not to pauperise by giving anything that the poor could be induced to work for or to buy.

When the Home of Industry, 60 Commercial Street, was secured, its first use was as a workshop for these little ones to work under a match-box manufacturer. By this arrangement Miss Macpherson secured an hour and a half in the

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day to feed and educate them, paying them for the time as if they were working, instead of holding classes in the evenings, when they were so exhausted as to fall asleep over their lessons.

After a summer holiday she wrote :

“The first walk from my home to the Refuge was one of the deepest interest.

“Our Father's works in Arran's wild glens, surrounded with the mighty granite peaks, were beautiful to behold, but far dearer to my heart were the living stones, as the dear little match-box-makers, with their bright smiling faces, issued from court and alley to welcome back their friend. Truly it was worth much to be allowed to make their bread-earning work more bearable.

“Little pale faces became more grave as they told me that one farthing had been taken off the gross of boxes so that their earnings were lessened.”

During this first winter in London, Annie Macpherson was invited by some members of the Society of Friends to open classes for boys and youths at the Bedford Institute, Bethnal Green : a building the Friends had just erected and named after a benevolent Friend, Peter

Bedford. Annie Macpherson went out into the streets and gathered in the Whitechapel roughs. She found them even tougher material to deal with than the coprolite diggers. On week nights instruction in reading and writing was the inducement held out to attend. On Sundays the promise of a seat round a cosy fire proved sufficient lure. It was a great hindrance to the advancement of young working-men that they could not read, and in those days one of the most obvious ways of helping them was to teach them to read and write, help which many were grateful to avail themselves of.

But to secure attendance was one thing, to gain attention to any instruction was another. One evening she was much surprised and disconcerted to find the youth whom she was guiding through the mazes of a copy-book suddenly bowled head over heels into the next row by a well-planted blow from a boy behind, accompanied by the words, "Touch her again, if you dare." The mild student had been all the time quietly feeling his way to the teacher's pocket, while she was engaged in superintending his pot-hooks and hangers. Her chivalrous defender became her stout champion. He would

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ask most politely as she passed by his "pitch" on the street corner, if he could take care of her anywhere (meaning in places of danger which he knew better than she did), or call a cab or bus.

She learnt experience by means of failures. When she had secured an attendance of about twenty they deserted her class for the smoke-room, and night after night she sat alone. At last she went downstairs and asked one of them, a sweep, why none of them came now to the class? She discovered that they had vehement objections to a new comer on account of his verminous condition, and she had to promise to be more careful in future, though she regarded it as a sign of progress that they were beginning to appreciate cleanliness.

A great change was soon observable in the conduct of these youths. At first they knew not how to behave, and used to leave the room bursting into yellings and hootings as if from a theatre or circus. The closing moments were times of great trial, for then they would mock Miss Macpherson's desire to give them a solemn thought by bursting into a ribald song or lighting their pipes. Tears on one occasion came to her relief, and from that moment she never had a

struggle. The last half hour then became devoted to reading of the Scriptures, words of counsel and prayer, to which a hundred workingmen and lads listened attentively.

The Sunday Bible Class increased remarkably. Many tables were filled, in one hall with men, in another with women, all with large print Bibles before them, each table headed by an earnest teacher; and at the close all united for Miss Macpherson's final address. As many other teachers became able to take charge, Miss Macpherson left the classes already established and set out to seek for others still uncared for.

To win these shoeblacks and young thieves Annie Macpherson invited a number of them to tea in a lodging-house, as they would not enter any mission or school. "Their hand seemed against every man, and every man's against them." She found many of them were homeless and friendless, sleeping in barrels or under railway arches, covered with rags and vermin, barefooted in the winter's cold.

CHAPTER III

THE OPENING OF THE HOMES

“The most delightful thing in the world is to open a Home for little boys.”—ANNIE MACPHERSON.

CHAPTER III

THE OPENING OF THE HOMES

THOUGHTS of the misery of these children haunted Annie Macpherson. It seemed to her a mockery to try to tell them of God's love, and to give no hand to help them out of their hopeless environment into honest independence.

Mr. R. C. Morgan, editor of *The Revival*, sympathised with her longing, and, as a small beginning, in 1868 a house was rented and friends were induced to become responsible for the £6, 10s. which it cost to maintain a child for a year. The first year's balance-sheet shows that, out of a total income of £978, no less than £935 had come from readers of *The Revival*.

The first Home was for little boys under ten years of age. Six of the most needy children were chosen to be received as inmates. After prayer for blessing on the new undertaking, Miss Macpherson spoke to those who brought the children, telling them that she could only

keep them as long as God sent the money for their support, and that the only rule in the house would be Love.

Soon the needs of the little boys' sisters, who made the never-ending matchboxes, appealed so strongly to Annie Macpherson's heart that a second Home for little girls was opened.

One little girl, aged seven, was seen crying on parting from her brother who had been admitted, and it was found that she dreaded going away, having been sleeping in the streets two nights with her little brother. Inquiries proved that the father, a drunkard, had turned the mother and two children out of doors. Little Nellie was taken in, and that night, after a warm bath, as she lay down in a clean little bed, she said, "Oh! this is so nice. I always slept with eight in a bed; four at the top, and four at the bottom."

"THE LITTLE WOMEN WHO EARN MOTHER'S BREAD"

Three girls, whose father had died of cholera, attended Annie Macpherson's classes, and from her had learnt something of faith, hope, and duty. Once their mother had been able to earn

a good bit at her trade of shoe-binding, but machine-work superseded her needle; at last when sorrow and want had brought her very low, there was nothing left but matchbox-making for the children. She was only able to help them by cutting the paper for the boxes they made. Having fallen behind with the rent, and parted with everything, they were put out of their room, and spent a week in Bethnal Green Workhouse. Life in the wards seemed so horrible, owing to the people they had to associate with, that they came out again, and for three days slept under sheds or railway arches before they could get shelter in any house.

The third evening they crept into a small outhouse, having been without food all day. It seemed as if they would be driven to return to the workhouse. Mary, the eldest girl, said, "Oh, mother, Miss Macpherson told us at the school that we should pray to God for what we need and He will give it us." So they knelt in the dark—it was about eleven at night—and prayed that God would send them food. Almost immediately a plateful of broken victuals was thrust under the door. Some woman in the house had seen the sorrowful little group go up

the yard into the outhouse, and had shown her human and Christian sympathy thus.

To the children it was God's answer to their prayer and they felt greatly encouraged. Mary said, "Now, mother, didn't I tell you that God would send it?"

Next day a very small room was found, and the girls resumed their matchbox-making. Mary was able to earn 2s. 4½*d.* per week, and her younger sisters 1s. 6*d.* each, and by long, strenuous toil they contrived to keep a roof over their sick mother, though they often had but one meal a day. They slept on a heap of cane shavings. Mary said, when questioned, "Oh mother takes off her petticoat and tucks us up, and she sleeps on a chair."

Hearing something of their need, Annie Macpherson went to visit them. She found the three girls working at a bench under the window. The floor was so covered with piles of matchboxes that she had great difficulty in finding room to stand without crushing some. When the three girls saw Annie Macpherson unroll a warm gown and present it to their poor sick mother, they sprang up with delight. "Oh," Mary cried, "poor mother did need a

warm gown so much, but we could not earn enough to buy one, so we prayed God to send dear mother a gown, and here it is!" Annie Macpherson talked over their circumstances with the little family and promised to help them, and to take charge of her three girls when the mother was gone. Then she offered up a prayer standing (for there was no room to kneel) for the sick woman and her children.

Through that winter, help was carried to the little family from time to time as charitable friends sent to Annie Macpherson. A shilling weekly was given towards the rent. At last one day the fatal hæmorrhage came on so badly that the children were frightened. Five times Mary went to fetch the parish doctor, but he never came. The mother died in her children's arms.

This is how Christian England treated her widows and fatherless children forty-five years ago!

But kindly hearts were determined that the children should have a chance. Mary and her sisters were received by Annie Macpherson into her Home, and their sad hearts comforted. And later on they bade good-bye to the scenes of their

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awful struggle and woe, and were taken to Canada. There, within a year, Mary was able to place in Miss Macpherson's hands nineteen dollars of her savings, with the request that she would search for her brother, "lost in London," and bring him to Canada also.

The girls behaved well and married happily in Canada. Mary is now mistress of a nice farm, with cows, pigs, and chickens galore, and has never experienced any anxiety about getting three good meals a day and plenty of good warm clothing. The youngest sister was adopted into a nice family and well educated, and, with pretty manners, plays the lady as well as anyone, having married the doctor son. The other sister is also comfortably settled in the land where there is "work for all who are willing to toil," and work which is well rewarded.

Ere long Annie Macpherson felt that the bigger boys, roaming the streets where they were so early initiated into vice and crime, must have a shelter too. Mothers would appeal to her to do something for their reckless roaming lads, and so a third house was taken for boys from

ten to thirteen years old; they were taught to read and write and trained to some useful avocation. They learned to patch and tailor, to make and mend boots, or attend to the housework. The first boy she rescued was placed as a page in a good family, and did so well that within a year he brought back Miss Macpherson some of his earnings "to help to save another boy." He afterwards became a footman in the household of the Duke of —.

Before long a fourth Home was needed; it also was soon filled.

As the children came, the needed money for their support came also.

Children of well-to-do parents sent their savings or collected for the little matchbox-makers. Mothers were glad to interest their children in such a work, and to draw their thoughts away, for a moment, from their own comfort and surroundings to learn the joy of helping others.

The Homes were called "Revival Homes," after the journal to which they owed so large a measure of support.

It was new and strange work at first to train these uncivilised boys. Annie Macpherson wrote :

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"After having them washed, we had beds prepared for them, little thinking that we had to *teach them to sleep in them*.

"After being put to bed, the light extinguished, we were often obliged to go and stop them fighting, and stay in the room till silence was restored.

"It was the same in everything. They had to be taught the most common usages of social life. But these early difficulties were overcome, and they learnt to play, laugh, work, and sit still like ordinary children."

One wild boy who had got his living by thieving refused for long to enter the Home. Annie Macpherson invited him to attend the Christmas Tree at the Home, and asked him if he would not like to become an inmate, telling him that God sent clothing and food for those who lived there; but he could not be persuaded to remain.

While he stood by watching the distribution of the gifts, a bundle of boy's clothing was handed in.

Next day he was overheard telling his sister "he supposed he should have to come in, for God had sent the clothes for him."



THE ANNIE MACPHERSON HOME OF INDUSTRY, 29 BETHEL GREEN ROAD, E.

One of the most mischievous boys, whose daring pranks constantly brought him into trouble while in training, in after years became a missionary in India.

“THE HOME OF INDUSTRY”

The wonderful change made in the aspect and behaviour of these children after a few weeks' care and training in the “Revival Homes” led the friends interested in Annie Macpherson's work to desire more accommodation for the constantly increasing numbers.

At the end of 1868 funds were guaranteed by Mr. R. C. Morgan and other friends to rent a large warehouse which Mr. George Holland and Miss Lowe had pointed out as suitable for a Refuge.

This warehouse, No. 60 Commercial Street, had been used during the cholera epidemic as an emergency hospital; water and gas had been laid on every floor, and every arrangement made for convenience and cleanliness.

There was sleeping room for 120, or 200 in an emergency, besides large rooms which could be used as schoolrooms and workshops. The kitchen was on the top floor, an excellent plan, as the

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smell of cooking did not penetrate to the other parts of the house.

Since the cholera had ceased this building had remained empty, and many predicted that it would never be used again.

Annie Macpherson has described how often in passing Miss Lowe had pointed to this old cholera hospital, and how they had often joined in prayer that the Lord would give it to them that more children might be saved, and that the Matchbox-Makers' Schools and the Widows' Sewing Classes might be extended.

"Then," continued Annie Macpherson, "it never entered my mind that the Lord was fitting *me* to put this house in order, but from time to time we joined in prayer that the right *man* might be found. It had been hoped that George Holland would undertake the charge, but, after accepting the proposal, he withdrew, finding his Ragged School work too dear to be given up, and a meeting was called to consider whether the money which had been given should be returned to the donors, as the way did not seem open to proceed. As five of us were kneeling in prayer in Miss Lowe's room, asking for light, the Lord led me to offer my services *for a few months*, that

the house might be opened for the welfare of the hundreds of poor children whom we used to feed with bread and soup."

"My bodily strength at this time was very little; it was indeed utter weakness; *but there is a lift in the work that you won't find in anything else.*"

Feb. 1869. "To-night how your hearts would have rejoiced to have seen me and my happy hundreds of little toiling children in our new schoolroom at the 'Home of Industry.' One whispered, 'It was here my mother died of cholera.' Another, 'Oh! I was in this ward before, so ill of black cholera.'

"Their joy knew no bounds when told to ask their mothers to come one afternoon a week to sew, and earn sixpence. My object was twofold—to secure an opportunity of telling them the Gospel, and to endeavour to help them in the management of their homes and little ones. The children are no idlers themselves: tailoring, shoemaking, matchbox-making, are all being pursued on different floors of the building."

Among others present at the opening meeting was one William Booth, the late "General" of the Salvation Army, then just beginning his mission work in the Mile End Road.

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The following gentlemen formed the first committee :

Sir Arthur Blackwood
General H. M. Blair
Charles Dobbin
F. D. Drury

John McCall
Henry A. Maude
W. C. Miles
R. C. Morgan

The emblem adopted by Annie Macpherson was a beehive, and the name given to the building was "Home of Industry." From this time Mr. and Mrs. Merry were her willing and invaluable helpers, and as the work grew Mrs. Birt also joined their circle. Many efforts for the good of the neighbourhood originated from the Home of Industry. Sunday Schools for children and adults, Gospel services, prayer-meetings, and outside preaching in the lodging-houses and in Bird Fair made Sunday the fullest day of the week. Many young men of business from the city assisted in these services and classes. Among others, the present Bishop of Sodor and Man was superintendent of the Sunday School for some time, and Dr. T. J. Barnardo in early days used to come to drill the boys, and gathered much inspiration from Annie Macpherson. The Home became a training school for Christian workers, or rather a practice school, where they were led out and shown how to utilise their gifts "for the Master's use."

CHAPTER IV
EMIGRATION

“Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee : go up and possess it ; fear not, neither be discouraged.

“Moreover, your little ones and your children shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.”—DEUT. i. 21, 39.

CHAPTER IV

EMIGRATION

AFTER the cholera came the winter of 1866, with a most serious financial crisis. Work was hardly to be found ; people who once could and did charitably assist the poor were reduced to penury themselves. Already weakened by disease, sickness, and death in the homes, the people had no strength to resist when attacked by any illness. "My God!" was the agonised wail of a Christian father over his three dead and dying children, "it is because I have not bread to give them." The state of affairs in the East End oppressed like a nightmare those who were trying to relieve the distress.

In 1869 matters seemed worse than in 1867-8. Labouring men entreated to be sent to some place, no matter in what part of the world, where a man might earn his living and support his family. Annie Macpherson became convinced that the real remedy lay in emigration. Not

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only were those who went out benefited to an immeasurable extent, but they left behind elbow-room and less eager competition for the bit of work or charitable dole.

The Rev. Styleman Herring was sending families abroad, and Miss Macpherson had been the means of helping to send some to New Zealand.

In 1869 Miss Ellen Logan and Miss Macpherson issued a circular headed

“Emigration the only remedy for chronic pauperism in the East of London.”

In it they said: “We who labour here are tired of relieving misery from hand to mouth, and also heart-sick of seeing hundreds of families pining away for want of work, when from the shores of Ontario the cry is heard, ‘Come over and we will help you.’

“We are waiting to seek out the worthy, not yet on the parish list, but who soon must be; we will see to their being properly started and received on the Canadian shores, if you will give us the power to make a golden bridge across the Atlantic.”

An emigration fund was opened at the “Home of Industry” to send selected families to Canada.

During that summer 500 persons were despatched. The work of selecting and clothing these hundreds and arranging for their reception in Canada was a tremendous strain on the strength of all concerned. Lists of names, ages, number of family, occupation, were sent ahead by a previous mail. Agents of the Canadian Government thus apprised received the families at Quebec, and sent them on to the district where their trade was in demand.

Meanwhile the four "Revival Homes," and later the larger "Home of Industry," were filled to overflowing with fatherless children. The difficulty of finding employment for the elder lads, owing to their want of education, led to the decision to send some of these active spirits to Canada under the care of Christian men among the families who were going.

In 1870 Annie Macpherson made the bold resolve to go to Canada with a band of young boys. In a letter she wrote :

"Many are entire orphans, or worse than orphans. We feel it is not enough as Christian workers to cleanse, clothe, and pass them away into strangers' hands. What we wish and hope to do this spring, the Lord willing, is to establish

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a branch Home to this Institution in Canada, having a like-minded agent there to care for and watch over the welfare of each young boy as he is placed out, saving for him his wages, counselling him and, if sick, caring for him. If this proposal meets with a response, health being given, I am prepared to give my strength and go to Canada for three months this spring—taking out the agent and the first hundred boys.”

A young lady, Miss Ellen Agnes Bilbrough, who had become deeply interested, volunteered to go with Annie Macpherson at her own charges.

These two ladies went forth in May 1870, with 100 boys rescued from the perils of the London slums, to face the unknown risks and discomforts of the stormiest of seas, and to land on a strange shore, where they knew of neither friend nor shelter for their helpless charges. We have now become so accustomed to hear of the kind welcome given in Canada, and the prosperity of the young emigrants, that we cannot realise the greatness of the faith and courage of Annie Macpherson and her co-worker Miss Bilbrough in undertaking this task.

At that time the shipping companies provided nothing but the plank beds and roughly cooked

food for emigrants. They had to take with them all bedding and utensils for the children's use on board, the boys carried their outfits in white canvas bags slung over their shoulders. However, the way was wonderfully opened for them, and they met with great kindness on the ship and in Canada.

The loving kindness of God was shown in the party having been directed to a ship whose captain was one in a thousand. His fondness for children was evidenced by the deep interest he took during the whole voyage ; when weather permitted he almost daily went down to the steerage to read a useful story, or give some sound advice on the future life in Canada. Every sailor's heart seemed won, and it was most amusing to see the boys answer to the sailors' call, "Here, little Macpherson," their own name being unknown. Captain J. E. Dutton knew the secret of management, not only giving the lads kindness, but occupation. He set them to keep watch at certain points, and made them useful in the cooking and baking departments.

Absurd rumours had gone out that Miss Macpherson was coming to Canada with 100 wild London arabs, and the Canadian Government

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ordered their immigration officers at Quebec to make a strict inspection and send them all back if unsuitable. However, the agent, Mr. Louis Stafford, declared that they were a fine, healthy, obedient set of boys, and Canada could do with any number of that sort. He offered to place the whole lot out himself, but the offer was not accepted, as Miss Macpherson wished personally to place her boys and to know the families to whom they were to be entrusted. At Montreal they were welcomed by the late Mr. T. J. Claxton and other friends, and lodged for the night at the St. George's Home. Situations were found for twenty-three, and they were told that sixty applications for boys were to hand at Hamilton, Ontario.

Immigration agents, after they saw the children, were ready to dispose of all at each point of the journey, but Miss Macpherson steadfastly adhered to her idea of distributing them as widely as possible to form a wider basis for future plans.

Many a loving helper came forward to share the privilege of caring for the orphans. In some towns they were housed by the Mayor, in others kindly farmers fitted up their barns comfortably to lodge the little men. In Ottawa twenty were

most kindly received by the ladies of the committee of the Protestant Orphanage and kept until homes were secured for them.

The kind Scotch stewardess, a widow, with bairns of her own, came on to Toronto with them and gave a week of toil over the boys. Scorning an acknowledgment, she said, "Will ye no let me do something for Jesus as well as yourself?"

At Belleville, Ontario, the Mayor and Council invited Annie Macpherson to stop, and finally rented a house and placed it at her disposal.

*Official letter from the Warden of the County
of Hastings and from Senator B. Flint*

"MISS MACPHERSON,—On behalf of the Council of the County of Hastings, I am to convey to you officially the intimation that in the event of your permanently selecting this locality for your 'Distributing Home' the County Council will pay the charges in connection with the rental of the premises, leaving the management entirely untrammelled by conditions in your hands.—I am, yours sincerely,

"A. F. WOOD,
"Warden, co. Hastings."

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"In addition to fully confirming the above, I would add the hearty co-operation of the individual members of the Council and influential persons in the neighbourhood.

"BILLA FLINT,
Senator."

Miss Macpherson left Miss Bilbrough in charge of this Home, and until her death in 1900 this lady remained the able and devoted honorary superintendent at the Marchmont Home, Belleville, Ontario.

Meantime Miss Macpherson visited and spoke in many towns. Her chief aim was to secure Christian homes where the training, begun in the "Home of Industry," would be continued. Christian families everywhere became interested in the good cause and anxious to help, by receiving one or more of the little English orphans into their homes: the demand was greater than the supply.

Mr. Merry went out with a second detachment, and in regard to this Mrs. Birt, who was holding the fort in London, wrote:

"Little did we think that in so short a time it would be possible to select, outfit, teach

70 boys, and to soften their manners, even if we had the necessary money for their expenses. The money was sent; boys anxious for employment came beseeching help; the needful work for their outfit was accomplished in far less time than usual by the faithful widows, who sewed away as diligently as though each had been making garments for her own son. An active, clever, earnest teacher was also provided by the Lord to give these rescued ones that punctual, diligent, daily attention that seemed to us so important.

“Our sister, Annie Macpherson, writes to us that she has been besought most earnestly by Canadian ladies to send them out some little English maids, and that they promise to watch over and care for them as if they were their own. The managers of the Girls’ Home, Toronto, say that ‘they have no doubt they could find suitable homes and places for girls from six to fourteen years of age,’ and encourage us to bring younger ones for adoption.”

Mrs. Birt accompanied her sister Annie in August 1870 with a third party of young emigrants, all eager for employment, all willing to obey. Some Canadian youths hanging about the

station at Belleville to watch the new arrivals said sneeringly, "What have you come here for?" The sharp little Cockneys answered back immediately, "To work!"

The boys created a seven days' talk in Belleville. Their little sayings went the round of the place. A banker accosted one of them as he walked through the town, and asked about his home in London. "Well, sir," said the boy, "to tell you the truth I never had a home till twelve months ago, when I was taken into the Refuge." Their stories of want stirred the hearts of Canadians, and many a pious couple undertook the care of one of these poor boys as a thank-offering to the Lord who had prospered their way in the new land. There were many homes of peace and plenty yet without the blessing of children, and in one of these lived a farmer who, after receiving a boy, wrote: "Send me another; I can as easily feed a child as a chicken, there's plenty."

Other homes there were whose dearly cherished children had been taken by the great Reaper, and the bereaved parents yearned for another little one to love. Many such have found their reward after many years, in the care and affec-

tion shown to them in their old age by these adopted children.

Little John, who was adopted by such a bereaved couple, grew up and went out into the world with his foster-parents' full consent to seek his fortune. Meantime old age drew on, things did not go so prosperously with the old couple, and at last the evil day arrived when the farmstead had to be sold, and the old people purposed retiring to some small cot in the village to end their days.

In the beautiful Providence of God, John's heart had been turning to the old folks and the old homestead. He returned with his savings a strong, bearded man, and hearing from the neighbours what was taking place, he redeemed the farm, carried his foster-parents home, and himself looked after them to the end of their days.

Miss Macpherson saw from the first that a careful supervision must be maintained over the children after they were placed out. She therefore welcomed the offer of Miss Bilbrough and the good Scotch teacher, Mr. Leslie Thom, to remain in Canada through the winter, to carefully watch over the children who had been placed out. She wrote: "From the time that we became

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residents in Canada and had a Home from which to distribute them, we followed out our original idea of becoming parents to these rescued children rather than simple emigration agents to supply the labour market."

"It would be easy to set the little emigrant adrift and, as it were, let him 'paddle his own canoe' on the ocean of life, inquiring no further as to his welfare; but rather would we undertake a smaller work and carry out the healthful supervision of employers and employed. We would encourage those institutions which may have failed in emigration work, and who hear little of those they have sent out, to try again, securing adequate supervision in some form or other."

The rules formulated by Miss Macpherson are practically still observed.

Applicants for children have to give two references as to their character and standing, and a legal contract is signed for each child stipulating what treatment and recompense he is to receive. From year to year wages are increased: most of the children have money saved by the time they are eighteen years of age.

The majority remain in farm employment and

many now have their own farms; frequently they learn trades or work on the railroad, and many are locomotive engineers earning \$100 a month (£20). Some have become station-masters and telegraphists.

One friendless lad from Southampton work-house became pay-clerk on a railroad in receipt of a salary of \$1500 a year: he died at an early age, and at his funeral a special train was run for those who wished to attend, so much was he respected and esteemed.

The young people placed out from the Marchmont Home support one of their number as a foreign missionary. Another, when dying, left all his savings to endow a hospital bed for the use of the Home children.

Miss Bilbrough's courage and faith were severely tried, for the Marchmont Home was twice burnt to the ground—in January 1872 at midnight, and a second time in April 1875, this time, fortunately, during daylight.

The Canadians rebuilt it twice; the dear people expressed their desire that the new Home should be a real Canadian one, bought, fitted out, and furnished solely with Canadian funds.

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"We do not," said they, "desire to call on our English friends for anything for the Home, but leave to them the work of sending out the children to be distributed to various parts of Canada; and from our experience of the past we believe that young children, under the proper training they receive in the Homes, will, in the end, make the best settlers for our new Dominion."

OTHER SOCIETIES AT WORK

Other societies soon began to see in emigration an opening for their well-trained children, more especially for such as had bad relatives who frequently interfered, with disastrous results, when the children were placed out at home.

In 1871 Annie Macpherson wrote to her sisters and helpers in London: "Strike a note of praise for the answer to the many prayers of our Glasgow fellow-labourers. A friend in Scotland has been stirred up to give £2000 in order to build an Emigration Home in Glasgow, that homeless lads may be trained for Canada. Let us unite in asking that ere long similar homes may be opened in Edinburgh and Liverpool, where poor, oppressed orphans abound."

Dr. Barnardo in London; Mr. Quarrier of the Orphan Homes of Scotland; Mr. Leonard Shaw of the Boys' and Girls' Refuges, Manchester; Rev. Thomas Guthrie, D.D., of the Original Ragged Industrial School, Edinburgh; Mrs. Blaikie of the Girls' Home, Lauriston Lane, Edinburgh; Mrs. Smyly of the Bird's Nest, Dublin; and other smaller Homes sent out their first emigration parties through Annie Macpherson.

In a letter she wrote: "Mrs. Merry had to sit and gaze in amazement at what she saw to-day, viz. scores of farmers imploring us for boys, but we, refusing, reserved them only for those who had applied many weeks before. Do not be afraid of overstocking me with too many boys, for if they have stood the test of work at the Hampton Training Home I can place any number."

FOUNDING OF MORE DISTRIBUTING CENTRES

The demand in Canada for children nevertheless continued greater than the supply.

By the autumn of 1871 Miss Macpherson had secured homes for a hundred of the children far west of Toronto.

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As the applications for children from this district were constantly increasing, and it was as far from the Belleville Home as if the children were in Scotland and were supervised by ladies in London, it was deemed the time had arrived to open a Distributing Home in Western Ontario.

The pretty town of Galt, Ontario, was chosen for the location of the new Home, and a farm of one hundred acres was secured, that the boys might be given some training on the land before being sent out to situations.

Here she found herself amongst Scotch settlers ; the new district was pleasing to a Scotch eye, abounding in hill and dale, rich woods and gushing rivers, substantial farmhouses and highly cultivated fields.

A town meeting of a thousand inhabitants gave Annie Macpherson a hearty welcome to Galt. The audience was mostly Scotch, and their loving reception of their country-woman was almost overwhelming.

She decided to place in charge of this new undertaking a young lady who came from Cambridgeshire, who was accustomed to country life. This young helper owed her conversion to a visit Annie Macpherson paid one Sunday to

the village where she lived. After service in the village church Miss Macpherson leant over and touched the young girl in front of her on the shoulder, and said, "Have you given your heart to God?" The answer "No" brought the reply, "How *mean* of you when He has done so much for you." This arrow, shot at a venture, rankled in Miss Reavell's heart and led to her whole-hearted surrender. She took up the village work when Annie Macpherson removed to London, and later assisted in the correspondence at the Home of Industry. She remained for three years in charge of the distributing centre at Galt, after which Mr. and Mrs. Merry took the superintendence of the work in Canada and for many years relieved their sister of anxiety on that side.

Annie Macpherson spent part of the winter of 1871 in Canada, holding meetings and organising the work. From Montreal she wrote: "The much dreaded Canadian winter is really the most enjoyable period of the year. Though according to all accounts this is a very heavy snow season, I have no fears for the children; the air is so dry and clear, and well fitted to invigorate their bodies. This morning I started

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about five o'clock and soon forgot the fear which had crept over me but a week ago when I took my first winter journey among the snowy hills of the Province of Quebec. You will be imagining that owing to these prolonged snowstorms all work is stayed. Not so ; everything goes on most vigorously—lumbering, carting, cutting wood for summer's need. There is an education of forethought caused by having to watch against the heat and cold."

THE FOUNDING OF THE KNOWLTON HOME

in 1872 is a good illustration of the way in which, from a very small seed, a greater work can grow.

Two ladies, Miss E. G. Barber and Mrs. S. W. Foster, conducted a Sunday School for farmers' children in a little school building on a hill two miles from the village of Knowlton. They started a sewing-class on Saturday afternoon in order to teach the children needlework. In course of time a stock of small garments accumulated, which the children had made but which they could not dispose of, for there were no poor in the neighbourhood in need of charity.



Miss Barber



Miss Billbrough



Mrs. Merry



Miss Meiklejohn

These ladies read about Annie Macpherson's parties of young emigrants, and wrote asking her to come and speak to their Sunday School, and offering to give her the garments. Miss Macpherson was on the eve of sailing back to England, but she delayed her passage and visited Knowlton, where she was entertained by the Hon. Justice Dunkin, Miss Barber's half-brother, who was at that time Dominion Minister of Agriculture. He and other residents became interested, and the outcome of this winter visit was the establishment of the Distributing Home at Knowlton.

Miss Barber accompanied Annie Macpherson to England and spent a winter seeing how the children were received and trained. She then devoted herself to the management of the Knowlton Home. The Barber and Dunkin families came originally from Sheffield, England; and half the needful funds to purchase this Home were subscribed in Sheffield, Leeds, and Nottingham, and the other half in the Province of Quebec.

Mrs. S. W. Foster, wife of Judge Foster of Knowlton, devoted much time to planning the alterations and furnishing of the Home, and ever since has been one of its strongest supporters.

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For years she actively assisted in the correspondence, and her local knowledge was invaluable when Miss Barber retired and Mrs. Birt came a stranger to the neighbourhood to take over the Home.

For some years the parties of children were divided among these three Homes.

Then as it was found that the Home at Galt could readily absorb all the children Miss Macpherson could bring from London, she left the Belleville Home to Mr. Quarrier for the use of the Scotch children, and the Knowlton Home was generously placed at Mrs. Birt's disposal for the Liverpool Sheltering Homes.

In 1883 the Home at Galt was exchanged for one at Stratford, Ontario, which is still the depot for the children from the London Home of Industry, under the superintendence of Annie Macpherson's nephew, Mr. W. H. Merry.

In 1888 Mr. Quarrier opened a Home for his Scotch children at Brockville, Ontario. The Marchmont Home, Belleville, is now carried on for children from Manchester.

Dr. Barnardo, encouraged by the late Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., opened a distributing centre for his own work, which developed until now

there are in connection with Dr. Barnardo's Homes four Canadian branches capable of placing out 800 to 1000 children annually.

Mr. Fegan's Boys' Home, Southwark, London, has a branch in Toronto ;

Mr. Middlemore, M.P., founder of the Children's Emigration Home, Birmingham, has his own centre for distributing children at Fairview, near Halifax, Nova Scotia ;

The Bird's Nest, Dublin, has a Home at Hespeler, Ontario ;

The Wesleyan Society have their Emigration Branch at Hamilton, Ontario ;

The Church of England Waifs' and Strays' Society have branches at Sherbrooke, Province of Quebec, and Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario ;

The Children's Aid Society of London have a branch at Winnipeg, Manitoba ; and

The Roman Catholic Emigration Societies unite in a Home at Ottawa, Ontario.

MANITOBA HOME FARM

In 1887 Annie Macpherson was given two thousand acres of land in Manitoba by a Scotch friend who thought it might be developed in

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connection with the emigration work. She placed one of Mr. Merry's sons in charge, who had been trained as a farmer. Her plan was that small cottages should be built, each with an 80-acre farm attached. Boys who had proved their worth in Ontario and had learnt ordinary farm work were to be allowed to rent these small farms and work them for two years under the supervision of Mr. Merry. They would have the opportunity of earning some extra wages by working on the Home farm where Mr. Merry resided in their midst. At the end of two years' experience it was hoped the young men would be able to take up free grant land and start as independent farmers. This scheme was given a good trial, but the attempt was made during the early years of development in the North-West, when prices for wheat ruled so low as not to pay the cost of production.

HOW NED BROWN ESTABLISHED A PRAIRIE HOME

Since Annie Macpherson's death, the land in Manitoba has been sold and the branch closed. Nevertheless it helped some of the boys to start

out as farmers for themselves. The story of the way in which one of these lads, Ned Brown, established a home on the prairies is a sample of many others. Ned was not exactly a destitute orphan, but he was one of a large family whose parents were very poor, though respectable and hard-working. It was thought that a helping hand to their eldest son might open a door of hope to all the family. Accordingly Ned and a younger brother were taken to Canada in 1884, and settled in comfortable farmhouse homes. Their letters home were so encouraging that Mrs. Brown came about three years later to beg that her eldest girl, then a bright lassie of fifteen, might come to the Home for training with the view of joining her brothers in Canada. The following spring she also went out, and in a good farmhouse she became an expert in all kinds of household work, bread and butter-making, and milking the cows.

Soon Ned had saved enough to come home on a visit to his parents.

With joy and pride the parents welcomed the tall, stalwart lad, who had developed not only physically, but mentally and spiritually, in the New World. Ned's savings helped to see them

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through that winter—he bought coal, a brand new suit for the father, and boots for the children. Moreover, Ned talked over the project he had at heart of taking over to Canada the whole family as soon as he should be able to afford it. He was able to take another sister back with him to Canada, while a younger brother was taken by Annie Macpherson, that he might begin to learn farming and so be useful when Ned realised his ambition and got a farm of his own.

ADOPTING WESTERN METHODS OF FARMING

Ned was one of those selected to go up to Miss Macpherson's farms in Manitoba, and there he learnt all manner of new methods adapted to the climate and conditions of the prairies, which differed widely from Ontario. He learnt how portions of the virgin soil were first surrounded by the ploughed up fire-break and then set on fire in the peculiar Manitoban mode to thoroughly burn out the manifold rose-bushes, bergamot, and many other hundreds of species of wild flowers that had been flourishing in that wonderful loam for ages. Then he gained experience in working with machinery and in all the work of revolving

seasons on a mixed farm. Many make the mistake of "putting all their eggs in one basket," because the wheat crop is the easiest to grow, as it demands less constant labour and watchfulness. Once sown, it needs little more attention till the harvest-time. But if, as often happens, it is a failure, partially or wholly, the wise farmer on a mixed farm has other sources of income to fall back on—cattle, poultry, horses, pigs, and root crops.

"A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT"

With the superintendent's advice, Ned chose a farm for himself. He was thrifty and saving, beginning in a small way. He would work for the neighbours with his team of horses to earn a little extra, while his younger brother looked after his stock during his absence. Big, brawny Ned soon found, when making his way in the North-West, that the people did not ask: Who are you? Where did you come from? Who are your friends? but, What can you do? In 1891 Ned wrote to his mother saying that he had bought another farm of 160 acres, making 320 acres altogether, and that he and his brother

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intended to erect a house and stables during the winter and to have it all ready for his parents by midsummer. Annie Macpherson rendered kindly assistance in preparing the family for their long journey and assisting with part of the expense. It was arranged that they should share the children's accommodation in the steerage, and so travel under Annie Macpherson's wing.

On the 28th of July 1892 the joyful reunion of children and parents was finally accomplished.

AT HOME WITH NED AT LAST

“MANITOBA, *Sept.* 1892.

“DEAR MISS MACPHERSON,—I now take the pleasure of writing you once more. I am truly thankful for all the way the Lord our God has brought us up to this present time; again I thank you, dear friend, for all your exceeding kindness to us all: we shall never forget it, and hope, if the Lord tarry, should He prosper us on this farm, to be able to send back to England something in return, but we must have patience. ‘The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain.’

“Ned has got a good piece of land ploughed up ready for wheat another year, about thirty acres; he has got seven acres of oats this year, and we have been busy gathering them in; he will have them to keep his cattle through the winter—not any to sell yet; this is quite a newly settled district, not much broken up yet, but we have good neighbours.

“We had a very good voyage, and we got on well on the ship; everything passed off pleasantly. Mr. James Merry was very kind to us. The children were all very quiet and good; the train travelling was more trying to me than the ship, sitting so much; then we had to wait at Winnipeg two nights—from Tuesday till Thursday—and then we came on here on the 28th July, the very day you had told Ned to come and meet us; so he was there and brought us home in the waggon, praise the Lord.—Your humble servant,

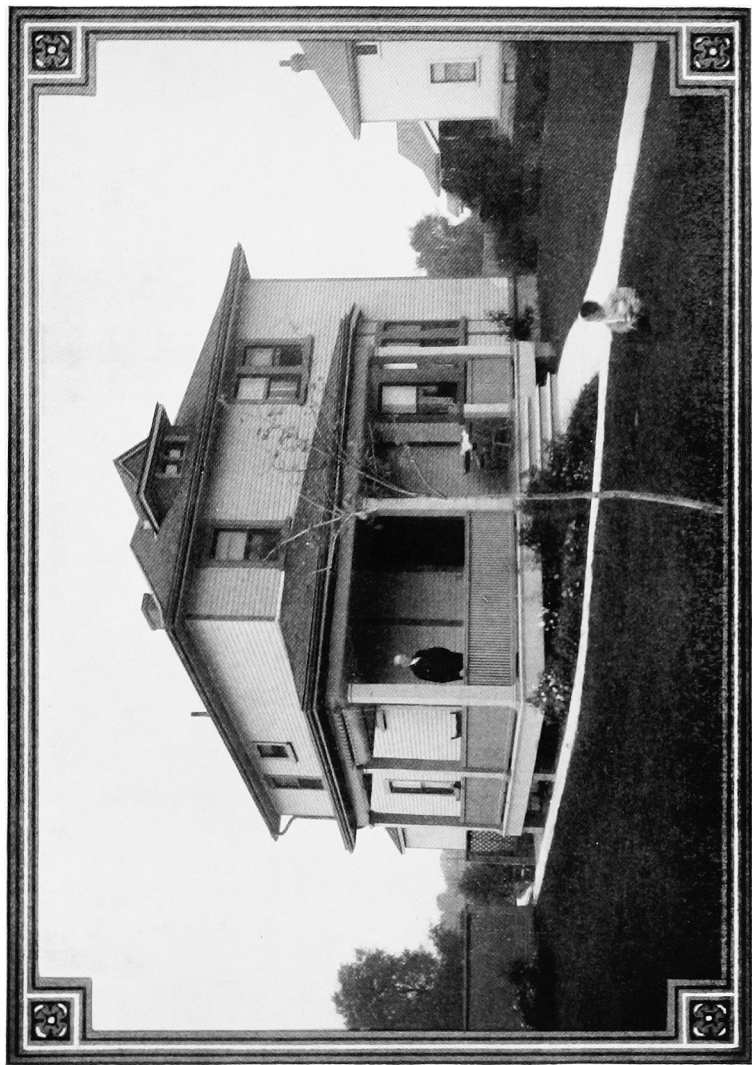
“M. BROWN.”

“TO MISS MACPHERSON.

“BELOVED BENEFACTRESS,—Permit me, one of your old pioneer boys, to drop you a line, so expressing my gratitude to you for your continued kindness to us all.

“I find that to-day, after a lapse of years, the greatest desire of my heart has been achieved, through the mercy of God, and your unmerited kindness. Father and mother, the three little ones, I and my sisters, are at home together in the North-West, on the farm we are proud to call our own. I am in good hopes of prosperous harvests in the future. My many respects for all, and my deep gratitude to you and all your faithful workers.—I am, your very grateful and ever humble servant,

“NED BROWN.”



THE HOME ONE OF THE BOYS BUILT FOR HIMSELF

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT—ORIGIN OF NUMEROUS
OTHER MISSIONS

THE ONLY WAY

“ Not a lamb within the fold
 But was dearly bought,
Not a wedge of yellow gold
 But was hardly sought,
Not a field of growing grain
 But in toil was sown,
Not one fruit of heart or brain
 But in blood was grown.

Not an anthem in the sky
 But was learned in tears,
Not a sheaf for God on high
 But by selfless years,
Not a grain of any worth
 But by bitter loss,
E'en for God a ransom'd earth
 Only by the Cross.”

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT—ORIGIN OF NUMEROUS OTHER MISSIONS

WHILE Annie Macpherson was busy laying the foundations of the work in Canada broad and strong, Mrs. Merry and Mrs. Birt were gathering in the children in London. The following letter from Mrs. Birt appeared in *The Christian* during 1871 :

“TO THOSE WHO LOVE THE LITTLE MATCH-
BOX-MAKERS”

“DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,—Many of you must have been wondering very often during the past winter what had become of the little matchbox-makers, and whether, in this sad time of sickness and distress, their friend Annie Macpherson has been busy amongst them, and if so what she can tell you about it; her ‘Beehive,’ standing in the very midst of these busy-fingered little ones,

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and your homes scattered far and wide over England, Scotland, Ireland, and many of the far-off lands. Although, dear young friends, she has been too busy to write much that would have interested you, we still feel it is only kind, in return for all your loving letters, collections, and self-denial, to let you know a little of what has been done for them.

“During the cold bleak winter months of December, January, and February so many little girls and boys were admitted to the Home, to be trained and outfitted for Canada, that it was found necessary to discontinue having the poor children here to make the matchboxes, for the room they work in was required to sleep and accommodate those who were living in the Home altogether. And just at that time there was, as you remember, much illness around us ; indeed, fourteen little ones, whose names we knew, died in two weeks ; and many dear young lives were spared, we believe, by the timely nourishment of some beef-tea taken to them by our kind, gentle little Bible-woman, but provided by the loving contributions from you, their dear little friends, who have so tenderly remembered them all through the trying months of a long winter.

How willing some of you have been to deny yourselves sugar in your tea, or extra toys and pleasures, in order to send relief to these young toilers for bread.

“One dear old woman, herself obliged to live in the workhouse, knitted them four pairs of warm stockings; and a kind little girl sent three postage-stamps, saying it was a present from her to the little matchbox-makers, for it was her ‘very own.’ God is looking down and sees into every heart. He marks the loving-kindness of one child to another, and not one tender thought for these poor children shall be forgotten. See what Jesus says (Matt. xxv. 40): ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.’ ‘And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward’ (Matt. x. 42).

“You will rejoice to know that, through the kind help of busy fingers, we have been supplied with all kinds of garments suitable for these little needy ones; and many are the parcels of clothing which we have received almost daily from loving helpers in every county of our land,

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thus enabling Miss Macpherson to clothe all the children in the Home, and distribute much amongst the matchbox-makers. I am sure you would with us feel very pleased to see them attending the evening and Sunday School, so much more comfortable and warmly clad, that they look quite respectable.

“One family of matchbox-makers at Christmas were in a sad state; the father had no clothes to put on fit to go and seek work, having already worn out his own boots, and those of his poor wife, walking about in search of employment; the sickly mother and four little ones, with such white, anxious faces, were working away at the boxes, and no set meal either for breakfast, dinner, or tea, only a loaf and knife in one corner, and a slice of bread given when they could work no longer without.

“‘Give me the little ones into the Home,’ said Miss Macpherson, ‘that I may feed them with wholesome food, and get their young frames strengthened.’

“But the parents shook their heads, and said: ‘Who, then, would pay the rent and find the coals and the bread to keep them from starving if they let their children go to the Home to live?’

“Poor children ! they looked fading away like delicate plants that have not sufficient light and nourishment for their growth. What, then, was to be done ? First, food was sent to them, clothes put on the parents, work found for the father and sewing for the mother, the two dear girls taken to train for little maid-servants, and the two boys fed and taught to read and write. Under these happier circumstances the family are now so changed that you would scarcely recognise them as the same.

“Amongst the many who daily call to tell their tale of sorrow, there sat in the hall, one bitter cold afternoon, a timid little girl of some five or six summers, with pale face, and garments so thin to stand against the cold piercing wind, that you would have wondered why she left her home in such inclement weather ; but by following her into the room, where Miss Macpherson sat writing, you might have learned the secret as you listened to her childish voice telling that mother was ill and could not get up, so herself and sister had been working at the boxes and wanted to get them carried in that they might have money to buy bread with, as they had not yet taken any breakfast, though

it was then late in the afternoon; she wanted someone to go with a little beef-tea, or something for mother to take. It was a sorrowful face that looked into the fire, as she tried to warm her little hands, stiffened by cold, and partly covered with the paste she had been using in her work. The home was visited, and their wants relieved. Not only at this time, but every week have this poor, nearly blind mother and fatherless little ones been helped. These, my dear little friends, are only one or two instances of many which might be given you.

“Now that the winter’s band of brave little fellows, with my dear sister, have landed safely on Canadian shores, we are again able to have the little matchbox-makers doing their work in one of the large airy rooms of her ‘Beehive,’ with long tables and forms, so much pleasanter than in their own cramped-up apartments, in narrow streets, where little light and sunshine can ever enter. They also have the advantage of learning to read, write, and sew, gathering each morning at the Bible-lesson and listening to the story of a Saviour’s love for them. Thus we hear again the hum of children’s voices, some-

times in merry laughter, at others in sweet singing, but always with busy fingers, turning thin strips of wood into clean little boxes for holding matches. Going down to the beautiful Bushey Park, if spared for their summer holiday, and taking tea at the Hampton Training Home, is one of their most joyous anticipations.

“Now, dear friends, we entreat for these little bread-winners your earnest prayers, that by coming under the influence of love and Christian sympathy they may learn to follow in the steps of Him who said: ‘Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.’ Also for our second band of intending emigrants now in training at Hampton. Trusting you will continue to ask special blessing for my dear sister and those who are now being placed into new homes amongst the kind Canadian farmers.—I remain, lovingly yours,
“LOUISA BIRT.”

Annie Macpherson found, as the work developed, that though the Home of Industry was in the right place for all the missionary efforts among the toiling masses, and for gathering in the children, yet it was not suited for training them for colonial life.

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Homes for the boys and girls were acquired at Hampton, Middlesex, where they could be quietly trained in the country. It seemed a pity these ideal Homes in the country were ever given up, but later on it was thought desirable to concentrate the work more, and the Training Homes were removed to a site facing London Fields, Hackney, N.E., about two miles from the parent Home in Commercial Street.

The house which was bought dated from the seventeenth century. It was called Wentworth House, and had originally been the country-house of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and tradition has it that John Milton courted his wife at this house. The house was pulled down and rebuilt in 1883.

In 1887 the old warehouse in Commercial Street was given up, and the Home of Industry removed to 29 Bethnal Green Road, only a short distance from the old building.

That the whole work was full of spiritual vitality is shown by the number of other missions which owed their start to the Home of Industry.

Annie Macpherson took a leading part in the founding of the following missions :

1. The Strangers' Rest for foreign seamen and

strangers in the port of London. She thus described the inception of this work :

“Years passed on ; the work of God increased ; my sister, Mrs. Merry, held a weekly Mothers’ Meeting in a curious little hall in Ratcliffe Highway. This led me to take an interest in the poor sailors lodging in that terribly sad street. For a time we went with fellow-workers to St. George’s Lodging-house. Both Bishop and pastor have told me that they never had better listeners than in those sad dens, the theme being the cross of Christ, meeting hearts to whom it was all so fresh and new.

“We heard that Mr. Radcliffe had become greatly burdened to pray for and speak to sailors. In reply to my request that he would come and help us, he promised to come at once. For eight successive Saturdays he came from Liverpool to London, and at the end of that time the Strangers’ Rest was established in our worst sailor-world. Many years have fled since then, and the Strangers’ Rests are shining out as beacons athwart the waves of sin, here and there. Sailors on many a vessel are godly witnesses for the truth as it is in Jesus. They are missionary converts going everywhere ; pulling the ropes as

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their calling; paying their own way in their round-the-world trips."

2. The Sailors' Welcome Home, with which Miss Child's name is lovingly associated.

3. The Scandinavian Sailors' Home, Poplar, under the patronage of the late Queen of Sweden. Founded by Miss Hedenström, who was for some time in training at the Home of Industry.

4. The Bridge of Hope. Founded by Annie Macpherson in response to a poor woman's remark in Radcliffe Highway, "You do lots for the men, why don't you do something to save us poor women?" and superintended by Miss Steer ever since.

5. Mrs. Meredith's Prison Mission. A class was held in 1869 in the Home of Industry by Mrs. Meredith for criminal women. This has now expanded to a large work with laundries and workshops for women on their release from prison. "The Princess Mary Village Homes," Addlestone, Surrey, in which H.M. Queen Mary takes a special interest, was built as an Orphanage in connection with the Prison Work.

6. Classes for Jewesses were held by Mrs. Way of the Philo-Judean Society, under Annie Macpherson's hospitable roof.

7. The Policemen's Christian Mission. Annie Macpherson began by inviting policemen to a Tea. Many became interested in her work and often brought wandering or deserted children to her motherly care. Miss Gurney took up this work among the police, and it has spread to many towns.

8. The Railway Gatekeepers' Mission. These humble and lonely members of the great railway services are cheered and helped by monthly letters and packets. The idea of this mission has been much enlarged and developed by the Rev. Douglas Ellison in his Railwaymen's Mission in South Africa and the Western Provinces of Canada.

THE FLOWER MISSION

9. In the spring of 1874 Mrs. Merry received a few snowdrops and violets in a letter from a friend in the country, Miss E. A. Henry (afterwards the Hon. Mrs. Gordon); she passed the sweet messengers from the country round among the widows in the Sewing Class "for each to have a smell," then divided the flowers and sent them to three dying Christians, one of whom

breathed her last fondly clasping a few violets in her hand.

Her letter of thanks to Miss Henry, describing the pleasure which a few flowers had given, gave birth to the thought that resulted in the Bible Flower Mission. As the result of an appeal by Miss Henry, baskets of flowers very soon arrived from many parts of the country to cheer the workers and children in the sunless, flowerless alleys, and ladies came and distributed the fragrant gifts in hospital and workhouse wards. The flowers opened the way for messages of God's love, and this ministry of flowers spread all over the kingdom and to foreign lands.

Not long since the superintendent of one of the largest hospitals came to bring her own and the thanks of one hundred nurses for the dear little flowers which, she said, was as nothing when compared to the multitude of sweet smiles of thanks from the bruised, crushed, broken, heart-sick, and hopeless faces and lips of the many patients under her charge.

10. In 1901 a Medical Mission was opened under the direction of Miss Macpherson's nephew, Dr. Edward Merry.

11. Many missionary candidates have been

trained by Miss Macpherson and shown how to minister to the needy, and have been loosed from that self-consciousness which hindered their speaking to others of the most important facts of life and eternity.

12. No account of the mission work carried on at the Home of Industry would be complete without some description of the Sunday morning preaching in Bird Fair.

Every Sunday, wet or fine, Annie Macpherson led a band of her fellow-labourers out "into the highways" bearing "the good tidings of great joy."

Bird Fair, as it is called, is held on Sunday mornings in Bethnal Green Road and the adjacent lanes.

Even at the present time the street is filled with men selling dogs, pigeons, rabbits, and other animals; there is a strong suspicion that many pet dogs stolen from the West End may be found offered here for sale, others are bred by genuine bird or dog fanciers; at the sides of the pavements old clothes and second-hand articles of every description are exposed for sale.

It is a cosmopolitan crowd. The Jews' Sabbath being over, they keep open shop, and the Gentiles

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observe no Sabbath. The missionaries take a little harmonium and start singing under the railway arches. A crowd gathers round and, as after forty years Annie Macpherson's workers are well known, they receive a wonderfully attentive hearing: some accept the invitation to come to the Gospel Meeting in the Home at night. Many remarkable instances have occurred of drunkards, thieves, and others who had lost hope being rescued from lives of sin through these gatherings.

“Therefore, O Lord, I will not fail or falter,
Nay, but I ask it, nay, but I desire,
Lay on my lips Thine embers of the altar,
Seal with the sting, and furnish with the fire.

Give me a voice, a cry and a complaining—
Oh, let my sound be stormy in their ears!
Throat that would shout, but cannot stay for straining,
Eyes that would weep, but cannot stay for tears.”

(*St. Paul*) F. W. H. MYERS.

CHAPTER VI
LIVERPOOL

"I called *two* willing servants to My feet ;
 I took them by the hand and said to each,
 I shed My blood for thee ;
 Lovest thou Me ?
 And then I gave *him* work,
 Large work within My fold.
 He had no earthly store
 Wherewith to feed My poor.
 It mattered not, I'd given *thee* My gold,
 Where is it now ? . . .
 He gave me all his time, and strength, and health ;
 I took it, and then asked thee for thy wealth—
 Thy *given* wealth ! asked that it might be free,
 Held in thy open hand for him and me.
 Then came the years of conflict and of toil,
 The days of labour and the nights of prayer,
 Souls perishing in sin,
 Few hands to fetch them in ;
 The hungry to be fed,
 The naked to be clothed,
 The outcast and the poor
 Gathering about my door.
 I wanted money, and I wanted bread,
 I wanted all that willing hands could do ;
 I wanted the quick ear, and ready eye—
 Aye, and the deep true soul of sympathy ;
 I wanted help, and then I called for thee,—
 I called and waited, and then called again ;
 O ! could it be that I should call in *vain* ?"

MRS. PENNEFATHER.



MRS. BIRT, 1870

CHAPTER VI

LIVERPOOL

THE sisters as they passed through Liverpool on their way to and from Canada with the parties of young emigrants, could not fail to be deeply stirred by the sights of terrible degraded poverty among the ragged children who swarmed along the streets and docks. They had prayed that a Home might be opened in Liverpool. A drawing-room meeting had been held by Mrs. Birt at Mrs. Duranty's, Princes Road, to enlist sympathy for the work in London, and the thought had occurred to several citizens who were present that a similar work might with advantage be undertaken for the children of their great seaport, and that Mrs. Birt had the requisite sympathy and experience to conduct such an enterprise.

The state of Liverpool forty or fifty years ago was even more neglected and deadly than East London. The death-rate in 1866 was

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41·7 per thousand,¹ and for many years after that date an equally high death-rate prevailed in the poorer districts of the town. Epidemics of typhus fever, smallpox, and cholera raged by turns.

At the time of the Irish Famine (1848-49), 300,000 Irish emigrated to England; 80,000 of these never got farther than Liverpool. Here they settled, trying to gain a living by casual labour at the docks. As the shipping and trade of the port increased by leaps and bounds, the overcrowding and insanitary conditions became frightful: 17,000 paupers were in receipt of weekly relief at the vestry; 20,000 inhabitants lived in cellar dwellings. These cellars were ten to twelve feet square and sometimes less than six feet in height. There was frequently no window, so that light and air could gain access only by the door, the top of which was often no higher than the pavement, so that the cellars were dark and ventilation was out of the question. They were generally damp from defective drainage. There was sometimes

¹ In 1900 the death-rate had fallen to 23 per thousand, in 1911 to 17·9 per thousand, and in 1912 (October) to 17·3 per thousand. But in certain wards the death-rate is still very high.

a back cellar, used as a sleeping apartment, and, having no direct communication with the external atmosphere, deriving its scanty supply of air and light solely from the door of the front apartment.

The whole of the cellar population were absolutely without out-offices or place of deposit for their refuse matter.

The water supply was very deficient. The water was only turned on in the lower districts for a short time in the day, usually at most inconvenient hours, and one result of this inadequate supply was the large number of prosecutions, arising from fights and squabbles amongst the people in their efforts to get their vessels filled with water during the short time that the supply was available.

Schools were few, and most of them were wretched in the extreme, dark and dirty and used as dwellings by the teacher's family.

The emigrants continually passing through Liverpool to embark often imported disease into the city. It was in this way the last cholera epidemic in 1866 originated. A sanitary inspector who was appointed to go round and supervise the disinfecting of the houses where

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cholera had occurred, states: "In the performance of this work I was called on to witness scenes of misery, wretchedness, and death which I trust no citizen will ever again experience in England. Often when a case of cholera occurred in a house on one day, by the next day, perhaps, the whole family were dead or dying, lying about the room, in all conceivable positions."

Typhus as an epidemic disease was not eradicated until 1883.

Every inquiry into these outbreaks of disease brought the excessive drunkenness of the town into prominence.

The Licensing Magistrates had adopted the policy of giving "free licences" to sell intoxicating liquor. Almost any person who applied for a licence obtained one. The Sailors' Home was surrounded by forty-eight public houses; the neighbourhood swarmed with crimps who watched for sailors as they were paid off from their ships and enticed all their earnings from them.

In the year 1871 there were 22,988 arrests and informations for drunkenness in a population of 489,000, while in 1911, with an increased

population of 746,000, the arrests and informations for drunkenness were 12,010.

An article in *The Times* (1874) referred to Liverpool as "the black spot on the Mersey." Commenting on the dreadful moral condition of Liverpool and its unparalleled death-rate, it concluded with the trenchant if not wholly just assertion that "The criminal statistics and the health statistics of Liverpool point to the same conclusion: Liverpool is a town whose leading inhabitants are negligent of their duties as citizens."

The year 1874 saw the foundation of a Vigilance Committee of leading citizens for purposes of reform, and in particular for opposing the renewal of unnecessary licences.

At this period one of the moving spirits in temperance reform in Liverpool was Mr. Alexander Balfour, a shipowner and merchant of the port. All efforts for the benefit of the town, educational or charitable, had the warmest sympathy and help both from him and from his partner in business, Mr. Stephen Williamson.

During a voyage from South America in 1867, Mr. Balfour had gone, as was his custom, among the sailors in the forecastle,

chatting and making friends with the men and endeavouring to help them spiritually. One question he happened to ask was: "Are you of the crew returning to Liverpool the same number that went out?" The reply was, "No; one of our shipmates was drowned, and another died from fever."

Mr. Balfour then inquired if they were married men, and on hearing that both were married, with families, he asked what was done for widows and orphans of seamen in Liverpool.

"Nothing," he was told; "in fact, such is the poverty in which they are often left, that many a seaman's widow is driven to the streets to gain a livelihood for herself and her fatherless children."

This inspired Mr. Balfour with the wish to start an orphanage for the children of seamen. As soon as possible after landing he broached the subject to his friends among the shipowners of Liverpool.

The idea was coldly received at first: one gentleman on whom Mr. Balfour called saying that there were already in Liverpool more institutions than the public could support, and that the town was well supplied with orphanages.

There was the Myrtle Street Orphanage and the Blue-coat School : what more was wanted ?

Mr. Balfour withdrew, but the following week this friend sent for him and said : “ Balfour, last Sunday in church I listened to a petition in the litany which had never caught my attention before. It was this : ‘ For widows and fatherless children, and all who are desolate and oppressed, we beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.’ And the thought came to me, ‘ What have I ever done for the widows and fatherless children ?’ and then I remembered the object of your call, and felt that I had turned away from me the opportunity God had put in my way to help them.”

This gentleman was Mr. J. H. Beazley, who joined the committee of the Seamen’s Orphanage and was one of its most ardent and valuable supporters throughout his life. He also joined the committee of the Sheltering Homes when that was established in the following year. For even after the orphanage for the children of seamen had been started, it was found that there was still a mass of neglected children in Liverpool for whom “ no man cared ” and who could not be relieved by any existing institution.

While attending the Mildmay Conference in London, Mr. Balfour and Mr. John Houghton heard Annie Macpherson speak about child-emigration, and they approached her to see if she could establish a branch of her work in Liverpool, but her hands seemed full and she referred them to her sister, Mrs. Birt, as suited for the task. They found that she was willing to entertain the thought of coming to Liverpool, and in November 1872 they called a public meeting in the Law Association Rooms, Cook Street, at which Mrs. Birt explained the methods and object of the work—to rescue the most neglected and poorest class of children. Many of these were not eligible for other orphanages, owing to the strict rules regulating admission, and for most of them there would be no accommodation even if the first difficulty could be overcome. A shelter was required where immediate admission could be given to children wandering without a home, cruelly ill-treated, deserted or neglected.

It was resolved that a society for this object should be formed in Liverpool, that funds should be raised locally, and that the funds and manage-

ment should be kept separate from the London Home.

A committee of fourteen gentlemen was formed. Their names were :

Bryce Allan	Thomas Hanmer
Alexander Balfour	Thomas Matheson
James Beazley	Martin Robinson
H. M. Blair (of London)	Samuel Smith
Henry Coubrough	Joseph Thorburn
John Gibson	Captain H. J. Ward
John Houghton	and Stephen Williamson

who became the first President of the Sheltering Home.

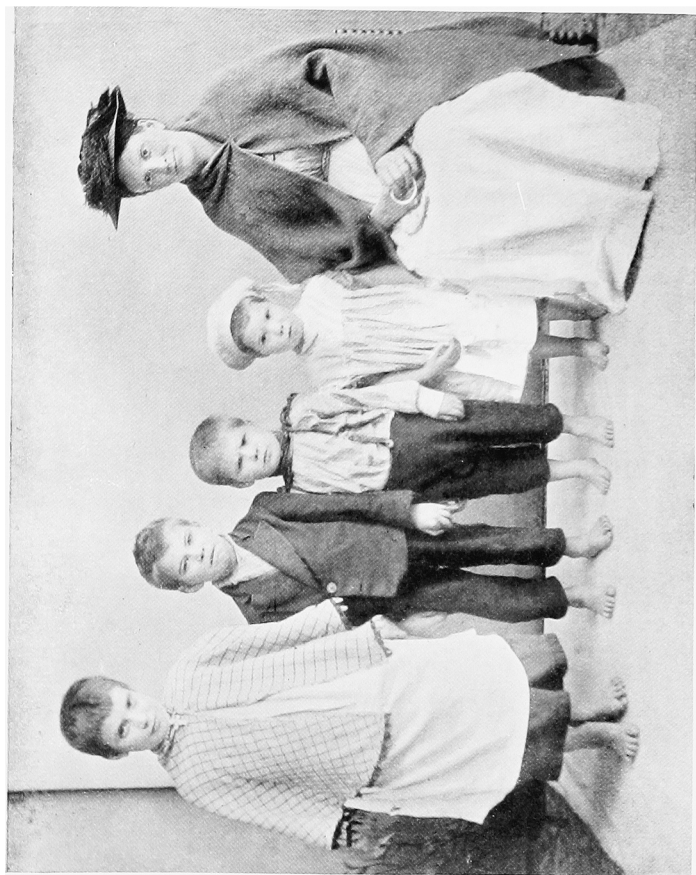
Mr. Houghton offered free of rent some premises in Byrom Street, adjoining an old Baptist Chapel called Byrom Hall, and on May 1, 1873, the premises were formally opened. They were situated between two of the worst streets in the town, Gerrard and Circus Streets, inhabited by the lowest characters and surrounded by public-houses. Drinking, fighting, and swearing went on all night long, varied by shrieks of "murder" and "police" and the rushing to and fro of wild, drunken men and women.

That there was an appalling need for some such refuge at that time is revealed by the fact

that 600 children applied in the first year that the Home was open, of whom 360 were admitted. Mrs. Birt wrote :

“They came with the old story of widows’ children left to their own devices, while the poor mother goes forth to toil over the wash-tub or the needle for their daily bread; poor step-children, who are felt to be burdens, and are knocked about and ill-used accordingly, as though to make them run away; drunkards’ children going through the education which will fit them for the reformatory, prison, or penitentiary, as the case may be; illegitimate children, on whom the sins of their parents are weighing with crushing power;—all these were in the ranks of those whom we have learned to call ‘little arabs,’ ‘waifs and strays’—names lightly and smilingly spoken, yet overlying thoughts too deep for tears.

“When hearing of the death of the father of three motherless children, I said to the elder brother who had brought the news, ‘I am afraid the little ones will not miss him very much.’ ‘Well, how can they, Mrs. Birt? there isn’t one of us who can ever remember that our father took us upon his knee, or said one kind word to us, or gave us a kiss’; and the lip of the big



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youth trembled as he said, ‘Oh, it does seem dreadful to die after such a life as that!’”

Those first years were full of strenuous work. Mrs. Birt visited the courts and looked up the cases; she often bathed them and cleaned their heads herself; during an outbreak of smallpox she carried the infected ones in her own arms to the ambulance, and accompanied them to the Hospital. She presided at the sewing-meetings, held weekly at the Home to make the outfits, and she herself accompanied every band to Canada, where some weeks were spent annually in visiting those already placed out.

In addition, she had the care and anxiety of bringing up and educating her own family of four children, who amidst all her labours for others were ever most tenderly loved and cared for.

That the work was not carried on without some pain of heart is shown in the following little note scribbled to her own children from Queenstown after sailing from Liverpool.

“*On Board ‘Nova Scotian,’*

“*April 7, 1874.*

“MY DARLINGS,—How sad and solemn was that time of parting and separation. What a

lesson it taught. I think the dear children in the red hoods saw what love was being given them and what it cost. We stood petrified, as it were, for a good while as the little tender went steering away from our big ship. But oh, dear darlings, there is so much of love and mercy mingled with it all that I dare not murmur in the least. It is now eight o'clock, dinner over at 4, tea over at 7, children all in bed, and my last round but one made for the night.

"The rain is coming down fast and thick, but we are all snug inside, *covered with His feathers*, and the *everlasting arms* of love underneath. Your sweet soul-comforting texts, my pets, will be an immense comfort to me. I hope you did not cry much. I did not give way, I did not dare; so much mercy, love, and tenderness had been mixed with it all. Tell auntie (Miss Macpherson) it was a wondrous feeling of gladness I felt that she had come to be with you.

"I will send back word from Halifax; meantime be glad of the quiet opportunity of plodding on with lessons, work, and walking. Commending you to my God and your God.—I am, your loving mother,

LOUISA BIRT."

Mrs. Birt gave the following description of a day's visiting in the slums :

“To keep the heart soft and tender for these stray lambs, I occasionally take a day for visiting. My last was to see if anything could be done for about fifteen orphan, or worse than orphan, children, all under 12 years of age, whom I was told I should find in so many courts, cellars, outhouses, or coal-yards in certain streets in Toxteth Park district. Dear friends, I dare not describe to you the helpless misery, moral ruin, the filthy wretchedness I found these children in—and the utter absurdity of the rich and affluent getting helpers or servants from amongst the children I was seeking. But that day's visiting brought a day of bed for me ; I was sick in mind, body, and spirit, overwhelmed by the awfulness of the lives which little children see and lead. Three little creatures I saw shut up in a small cellar, of about three or four yards square, with a filthy wicked old man, and what I was told about them made me feel quite ill. Poor lambs, they seemed lost, terribly lost. Oh ! do let us come, as sons and daughters of the living God, some with wealth, some with talent, some with time, and laying them at the feet of Jesus, pray Him to burn into our hearts some

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of the same love for perishing children which inspired Him when He left His glory and stooped to our low estate."

People often ask how the children are found.

Mrs. Birt held an annual Tea Meeting for the Scripture Readers, City Missionaries, Bible Women, School Board Visitors, and Superintendents of other Institutions in the city, at which the Home was made known to those who were daily going in and out among the poor people, and they were encouraged to bring any needy children whom they encountered to the Sheltering Home for help and succour. Some of the missionaries can count the cases they have brought by the dozen.

In this way the Home was fed. The children are usually brought to the Home by such agencies as those mentioned, or they hear from neighbours of children who have gone to Canada and done well. A successful emigrant is the best emigration agent.

Among the first admitted to the Home were three children whose father, a sea-captain, had gone down with his ship in a storm one Christmas morning. His loss appeared to have driven the mother crazy; she several times attempted

to jump into the Mersey with her baby in her arms. She refused to part with this youngest girl, and for years the poor child led a sad life, dragged through the streets of the town by her drinking, half-crazed mother. When the child was seven the School Board interfered and placed her in an industrial school. Meantime the other three had got on very happily in Canada and were most desirous that the little sister should be brought out, but the mother always refused to consent.

When Ellen was sixteen she left the industrial school and took a situation, but the mother persecuted her so that she could not retain it, and with tears besought Mrs. Birt to help her away. At last Ellen was helped to join her brother and sisters, thankful to have escaped from her poor, unfortunate mother and to be free to lead a respectable and honest life.

Though she came a stranger to the city, Liverpool soon became home to Mrs. Birt, and she often said at the end of a homeward voyage that her heart warmed to the grey streets and the din of the town, and above all to the bare-footed children always in evidence on the Landing-stage.

She made hosts of warm friends, from whom she ever received much kindness. The homes of Mr. Alexander Balfour, Mr. Samuel Smith, Rev. Dr. Lundie, Mr. Bernard Hall, Mr. T. D. Philip, and many others were thrown open to her, and her warm, loving spirit of sympathy and service, her cheeriness and intense enthusiasm in her work, and her interest in all other efforts for good in the town made her a welcome friend to old and young. The children would hang round her, delighted with her stories of the little rescued ones, and young women also found her a sympathetic friend.

The ladies of Liverpool and Birkenhead were enthusiastic helpers in providing the thousands of little folks with pretty and useful outfits for their start in life. A large sewing-meeting which met at first in the old building in Byrom Street was afterwards divided, and meetings were arranged for the convenience of the ladies in different districts; the most notable of these have been the sewing-meetings at Rock Ferry, at Trinity Church, Claughton, and at Mrs. Joseph Thorburn's residence in Edge Lane.

Time would fail to tell of the many individual helpers who have in this way borne a share in

the work. Little children, invalids, servant-maids have all contributed their quota.

One lady of ninety-three still knits socks for the boys, and her maid when sending a parcel lately said: "Miss M—— often has the needles in bed at half-past seven knitting for your boys even before she has her breakfast."

The late Bishop Ryle had his sympathies very greatly drawn out by the misery of the poor waifs who abounded in his new diocese, and became a strong supporter and friend of the Sheltering Homes, never failing to give his word of encouragement at the annual meetings in the Town Hall.

He used laughingly to say that he never had ascertained to what denomination Mrs. Birt belonged, for her sympathies were so wide that she seemed able to co-operate with all, and he approved of the undenominational character of the work.

As a Scotchwoman, Mrs. Birt became connected with the Presbyterian Church in Beech Street, of which the Rev. R. H. Lundie, D.D., was then minister. Dr. Lundie took a deep interest in the work,*and made a trip to Canada with a party of the children, visited many in their

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farm-homes and situations to see for himself how they fared in the New World.

The Beech Street Sunday School has contributed £10 per annum to the Sheltering Home for twenty-nine years for the purpose of paying one child's expenses to Canada each year. Reports and photographs from their protégés have been sent to the school from time to time so that they could follow their progress in Canada. The total contribution from this school has been nearly £300.

The first treasurer of the Liverpool Home was Mr. Henry Coubrough. After he retired Mr. Joseph Thorburn acted as treasurer for twelve years, and ever remained a loyal supporter. The following letter from Mr. Williamson refers to his appointment :

“LONDON, *March* 21, 1874.

“MY DEAR MRS. BIRT—Everything connected with our good work is now in a satisfactory condition, I think. The Treasurer I have in view is Mr. Joseph Thorburn, who, with his wife, has been to your meetings. Speak to him if you have a chance. He cheerfully responded to my appeal, which makes it all the more satisfactory. He is active and intelligent, and always about. A

second time you leave in my absence. Never mind, God can prosper you and send you favouring breezes, which is more than I can do. I can only remember you and pray for God's blessing, and that you may be under His guidance and in His safe keeping as before.—Yours most truly,

“STEPHEN WILLIAMSON.”

Since that time three other gentlemen have filled the office, of whom Mr. E. C. Thin is still the active treasurer.

In 1875 Messrs. Moody and Sankey held a series of great evangelistic meetings in Liverpool in a wooden hall specially erected for them, capable of seating 8000 people. Mrs. Birt took an active part in the choir, and also in the inquiry room where those impressed during the meeting met for conversation and prayer, and were helped out of their difficulties into peace and faith in Christ.

The Young Men's Christian Association might be quoted as an instance of the permanent results which ensued. It had never before had more than about thirty members, but after these meetings the numbers increased so largely that a new building was required to accommodate them.

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Funds were raised, and Mr. Moody laid the foundation stone of the present building of the Y.M.C.A. in Mount Pleasant.

The following is one of many true stories of Mr. Moody's influence :

“ A young man of good position, intimate with the Prince of Wales, was in Liverpool attending the Aintree Races at the time of Mr. Moody's meetings. He strolled into the hall one day, thinking he would pick up some of the American preacher's Yankee phrases and have something funny to relate at dinner that evening—but he who came to scoff remained to pray ! He entered the inquiry room at the close of the service and yielded his heart to God. He then asked Mr. Moody's advice on his future course, and especially whether Mr. Moody thought he ought to sell all that he had and give to the poor. Mr. Moody answered abruptly: ‘ Young man, go home and pay your just debts ; perhaps when you have done that you will not have so much left to give away.’ The preacher's shrewd penetration had exactly divined the truth. There was only a small income left when all college and gambling debts had been cleared off. But this young man proved no half-hearted convert ; the

change in his life was radical and entire. He led a grand life of service for many years until called to higher service in the life beyond.

“One of his deeds of kindness was to adopt one of Mrs. Birt’s little rescued boys who was too delicate to be placed on a farm, with the intention of giving him a good education: unfortunately the little lad was not long spared to profit by his friend’s help. He died suddenly of heart disease while at school.”

A great deal of the reform movement in Liverpool must be dated from these services of Messrs. Moody and Sankey.

Many hitherto formal Christians were stirred up into great warmth of love for the Saviour, and manifold efforts to raise and succour lost and downtrodden humanity. A broad spirit of brotherhood was evoked, in which narrow sectarian divisions were obliterated so far as joining in Christian work was concerned.

Mr. Moody remained ever a firm friend to the work among the poor children. In 1883, at one of his meetings in Hengler’s Circus, he started the first subscription list to build the new Home, and offered as his contribution to take ten boys from the Sheltering Homes to educate at his

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schools at Mount Hermon. The promise was carried out and these boys were all enabled to take a college course, and became useful Christian men, some clergymen, others journalists or Y.M.C.A. workers.

On several occasions Mrs. Birt visited Mr. Moody at his happy country home at Northfield, Mass., U.S.A., rejoicing with him as he by degrees saw his dreams fulfilled of raising a college for poor but deserving youths, where they might obtain higher education to fit them for the Master's service.

On either side of the noble Connecticut River rose stately lecture-halls and dormitories, classrooms and other buildings, where 600 young women and 700 young men now receive a first-class education under Christian influence.

During the summer holidays these buildings are utilised for Conferences of College Students, Girls' Schools, and general gatherings of Christians.

Mr. Moody was the first to invite students from other colleges to unite in a conference on religious matters, and from this seed has sprung the world-wide Students' Christian Movement.

CHAPTER VII
THE CANADIAN SIDE

“You have a large number of the most admirable people in Canada ready to adopt your children. I want to give the childless home of Canada the child it wants to have.”

EARL GREY.

CHAPTER VII

THE CANADIAN SIDE

BEFORE the first party of Liverpool rescues were trained and ready to sail in 1873, an invitation was received from Lieut.-General J. Wimburn Laurie, C.B., to bring them to Nova Scotia. General Laurie was at that time organising the Canadian Militia, and with the insight of a true empire-builder he saw the advantage of securing these young emigrants. He assumed all the expense after the children landed at Halifax; he obtained a contribution from the Provincial Government towards their passages; he inaugurated a system of quarterly reports on the health and progress of each child, and he gave his personal care and attention to the allotment of each party.

General Laurie was well known throughout the Province of Nova Scotia, and became such an enthusiastic advocate of the children's cause that many of the best families threw open their

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homes to these little English orphans. Many little ones who were adopted have grown up and made good marriages, and their children are now to be found filling positions of eminence and responsibility.

In a letter to the Halifax papers General Laurie described his method of placing out the children :

“SIR,—After the interest shown by the public in the success of the experiment tried by Mrs. Birt of bringing out young children for location in this Province, I feel it my duty to render to the public through the press an account of the working of the experiment, and of its entire success.

“Mrs. Birt arrived with 76 children on the 24th August, and through the extreme kindness of the Committees of the Boys' Industrial School and St. Paul's Girls' Home, the whole of the children were at once housed in these two institutions on the understanding that the actual cost of their living should be reimbursed by me. I need hardly say that this liberal arrangement on the part of both committees saved me much anxiety and trouble, and I was thus

more free to attend to the allotment of the bairns.

“I had previously to their arrival received over 100 applications for the children, which I had duly tabulated, and on the 25th August Mrs. Birt and I proceeded with the allotment, and that same night notices were posted to the 76 parties to whom children were allotted. Where applications were made for a boy and a girl, brother and sister, if of a suitable age, were first allotted; next in order came the applicants who wished to adopt, and lastly came, according to date of application, those who wished to train for service. On the 26th Mrs. Birt addressed a most influential meeting on the aim and working of her scheme; full reports of this meeting appeared at the time in the public papers. I would simply say that the Hon. Alexander McKenzie and Rev. J. K. Smith reported most favourably of the working of Miss Macpherson’s plan in Ontario, and the Hon. William Annand pledged the support of the Provincial Government to Mrs. Birt’s scheme, and clergy and laity were strong in their approval and support.

“On the 27th the allotment of the children

began. Owing to short notice many applicants did not attend on the first day or two; and the desire to make both applicant and child thoroughly understand future mutual relations naturally took up much time, so that the business of allotment was rather a long affair. Some little delay was caused by the misconception of applicants, who directed that the children allotted to them were to be sent like packages of luggage addressed. This I steadily refused to accede to, insisting in all cases that some responsible person should receive the child and take charge of it from Mrs. Birt.

“I was careful to distribute these children to all parts of the Province, so that the working of the scheme might be better tested; if they did well, homes would be opened up for a large number, and if they turned out badly, it might as well be generally known at once that the scheme had failed, and that we should not prosecute it further. Every quarter a full account of the health, conduct, progress, and lay and religious instruction of the children is received by me, certified to by the clergyman whose ministrations each attends.

“The reports for the last quarter are uniformly favourable. The children are obedient, willing, and quick to learn.

“Having now planted out all the 76 in good homes, I have offered the Liverpool committee, to whom Mrs. Birt is honorary secretary, to locate 200 children next year. They will probably arrive in May, and I shall be happy to receive applications from Nova Scotia or the neighbouring Provinces for these children in March or April next.—I remain, obediently yours,

“J. WIMBURN LAURIE.

“OAKFIELD, *Oct. 29, 1873.*”

About 550 children were placed in Nova Scotia through General Laurie's efforts; then a severe illness necessitated his withdrawal from active participation in the work.

At this juncture Miss Macpherson offered the use of the Distributing Home she had established at Knowlton, Province of Quebec, but which she no longer needed. The principal inhabitants of Knowlton signed a petition to ask that Mrs. Birt and the Liverpool committee would send children to the Knowlton Home.

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The seventh party of children was accordingly taken to Knowlton in 1877.

Mrs. Birt described the arrival at the beautiful country Home thus :

“We sailed with the seventh band of small emigrants on the 19th April 1877 to Quebec.

“Picture the grey, rolling North Atlantic ; the crowded steerage and decks of the steamer laden with emigrants. Under a lifeboat, screened from the wind and spray by a stretch of canvas, sit the group of children in their warm coats and caps or hoods. Singing, stories, recitations, friendly talks, interspersed with drills or skipping and races, occupy the time. This voyage of eight or ten days is of incalculable benefit to the city-bred children, bracing and strengthening them after a winter's training, and giving them a healthful relaxation of play and rest before they start out on their new careers.

“We arrived at the Distributing Home on the 1st of May. At Knowlton we received a most cheering and hearty reception, and every one who visited the Home seemed delighted with the children. We had over a hundred applications for them. Occasionally during the first days of our distribution work there would



DISTRIBUTING HOME, KNOWLTON, PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

be a hue and cry from the children, 'A farmer's coming!' 'Oh, let him have me, Mrs. Birt!' 'No, let him have me. I want to be a farmer and earn my own living.'

"On bringing in about half a dozen and letting the farmer speak to them, it was very funny to see these dear children stretch themselves up to their greatest height; and, if I relaxed and permitted any freedom, the scene would become trying with beseeching voices saying, 'Take me, sir, I'll be such a good boy.'

"I have seen both men and women weep, and reply, 'My dears, my *heart* is big enough to take you all, but my *house* ain't.'

"And when the choice was made it would take a little time for the rest to get over a feeling of intense disappointment at not being the distinguished chosen one, who in a little while would be ready for his journey to his new home with his new father. They invariably went off amidst English cheers.

"It is sorrowful work unbinding, as it were, the little twinings their sweet, obedient ways have already bound around us. Many were writing letters to friends in England, but many had not a love-link to earth. One little fellow

said, 'I ain't got nobody to write to but you.'"

Shortly after Mrs. Birt assumed the responsibility for the Knowlton Home, a young lady, a banker's daughter residing at Quebec, wrote to her :

"QUEBEC, *March* 18, 1877.

"DEAR MRS. BIRT,—Having heard that you have taken the Knowlton Home, and that you would probably bring out a party of children next month, I write to say I am so thankful to think the work is to be carried on. We have had a sewing-meeting in Quebec for five winters, and always managed to send a good supply of useful articles for the children. This winter we have been working as usual, but, not knowing how things would turn out, we have not done as much as usual, but shall forward what we have after arrival of the children at Knowlton. Two years ago it was my happiness to spend three months at the Home and visit some of the children in their new homes. I was delighted with what I saw. Had I been free to devote myself entirely to Christian work, I think I should not have taken long to decide where to turn my feet. The work has my warmest

sympathies and prayers, and I thought I would like to write to you and let you know that there are a few here in Quebec who are constantly remembering Miss Macpherson, her Homes, and the dear rescued ones at the throne of grace.

“ May our loving Father supply all your needs and open up Christian homes and hearts in this land of ours to receive the children and care for them for Christ’s sake.

“ When you arrive at Quebec we should like to have a look at you. Mrs. Foster sent those photos for us to see, and I have shown them to all who I think are interested in the work.

“ If you can find time to write me, I shall be glad to receive a few lines from you at any time.

“ Excuse a stranger writing to you, but I feel that in Christ Jesus we are all one, and I did so want to let you know that a few who love the Lord here in this town are praying for you and the work in which you are all engaged for our blessed Master.—I remain, your sincere sister in Jesus,

E. MEIKLEJOHN.”

Miss Meiklejohn’s grandmother had an astonishing experience of the perils of the sea, which

is recorded in Lieut. Crappel's *Voyage to Newfoundland*.

This lady, who was the daughter of a Canadian merchant, had married early in life a Lieut. Ensor in the English navy.

It appears that Lieut. Ensor, being anxious to show his young wife to his relatives in England, obtained charge of a trading vessel and permission to take his wife with him. They sailed from Quebec early in December 1812. During the voyage the vessel was wrecked on a desolate and uninhabited shore in Boune Bay, Newfoundland. The night was dreadfully tempestuous, and through great danger and difficulty Mrs. Ensor reached the shore in an open boat scarcely capable of containing four persons. At length the whole crew were safely landed, and immediately collected whatever could be saved from the wreck and placed the articles under a sailcloth. The winter had set in with such rigour that it was totally impossible to travel far in search of fishing settlements. A hut was erected to shelter the crew against the piercing cold of the climate. In this miserable state the youthful and delicate Mrs. Ensor remained through a long and dismal winter, upon a rocky coast

blocked up with an ocean of frozen ice, and surrounded on the land side by snowy mountains and icy valleys. Both the lady and her companions were compelled to cut off their hair entirely, because it became so strung with icicles that it was exceedingly painful and troublesome. To add to the unfortunate lady's sufferings, she was expecting again to become a mother.

The crew mutinied, swearing with dreadful imprecations that they would take away the life of her husband because he had prudently refused them an inordinate share of the brandy which had been saved from the wreck, and the barbarous wretches even threw firebrands into the hut in which she lay, although their stock of gunpowder was stored within.

At length the tardy spring made its appearance, but instead of comfort it brought additional misery to the unfortunate lady. Her husband, who had hitherto been her stay and solace, was drowned while attempting to land a few kegs of salted beef from the wreck. Left thus destitute and friendless among a gang of desperate miscreants, she had still courage to follow them barefooted through the woods until they reached the fishing settlements of Boune Bay. She was

here but badly provided with food or necessaries, and was therefore easily persuaded to go into a small vessel bound for Forteau on the coast of Labrador, from whence she hoped to procure a passage to Quebec. On her arrival at Forteau she took up her abode in the house of a Guernsey fisherman, but he treated her very badly. At this moment Mr. Pinson, a merchant of the place, generously offered her an asylum in his house, and at the earliest opportunity procured her a passage back to her parents. It was while at Mr. Pinson's that Lieut. Crappel saw the lady and heard the story of her misfortunes.

Mrs. Ensor reached Quebec safely, and shortly after gave birth to a daughter. The infant grew up healthy and intelligent and married Mr. J. Meiklejohn of Quebec, and became the mother of Miss E. Meiklejohn, Superintendent of the Knowlton Home.

During the summer of 1877 Miss Meiklejohn visited Mrs. Birt at Knowlton, and what she saw of the work of the Home led her in the following year to accede to Mrs. Birt's request to take up the position and duties of Superintendent of the Canadian Home, a position she filled with great courage, skill, and devotedness for twenty-six years.

It was a great source of strength to have a lady in charge on that side thoroughly conversant with Canadian customs and climate, and also of a practical nature, and endowed with courage for any emergency. The life at Knowlton, then a remote country village, was lonely, especially in the long winters. It often involved long drives in strange localities to visit the children; any case of sickness had to be tended and nursed on the premises, as there were no hospitals at hand to which serious or infectious cases could be sent; the house lacked the ordinary conveniences of city life, which were unattainable for many years. The water-supply all had to be pumped by hand from wells. The houses were lighted by paraffin lamps. If one walked down the village after dark a lantern was carried in the hand by which to pick one's steps. The large rambling building was only heated by French-Canadian "box-stoves," in which wood logs were burned; without constant stoking to keep up the heat, the house would have been left ice-cold by morning.

Largely owing to Miss Meiklejohn's exertions a laundry and bath-rooms with a supply of hot and cold water, also a furnace to heat the house,

and electric lighting were installed in 1885 at a cost of \$1500 (£300). This amount was gathered by means of several sales of work, for which articles were contributed by English friends and sold at Knowlton.

Mr. S. Smith, M.P., gave £100 towards this purpose when he visited the Home, and several friends in Canada also contributed.

The Home has been enlarged and added to here and there, but now is very much below the growing requirements of the work and the advance in sanitation and accommodation demanded to-day.

It is the wish of the committee to build or acquire a new Home in a more convenient centre for the carrying on of the work of distribution and supervision of the children.

The Knowlton Home was given to the committee by Annie Macpherson, and a welcome assured to the children at the period when the work was in its infancy and was struggling against tremendous prejudice and opposition at home; so that it seemed clearly the outlet opened for the children.

The movement began at a time when Canada was just awakening to its destiny as a nation;

Confederation of the Provinces had taken place in 1867. It was realised that the most urgent need of the young country was population.

The farmers enjoyed a rough plenty; the English children were seated at the same table and made sharers in the family life. To many of them the foster-parents became deeply attached, and did all they could to forward them in life. Opportunities in those early days were plentiful for any ambitious painstaking youth. Such opportunities are scarcely less to-day, owing to the enormous development that is going on over so great an extent of country.

But now it seems that the time has come to make a step forward. The people of Knowlton and of the Eastern townships have been glad to have these little English emigrants, and acknowledge that the children have filled a want among the farmers throughout a period when the main stream of emigration has been directed West to the settlement of the great Prairie Provinces, while the Eastern Provinces have been almost utterly passed over.

In 1892 Mrs. Birt travelled for the first time across Canada to the Pacific coast. It was a delightful experience—one of the few real holidays

away from the routine of correspondence and work. To see the prairie wheat-fields waving with golden grain for hundreds of miles, and the herds of cattle roaming the plains and foothills, satisfied her that there was no need for thousands to be starving and pining to death at home when here were countless acres ready to feed millions.

Introductions were given to her by the Hon. Edgar Dewdney, Minister of the Interior, to Lieutenant-Governors and people of the best standing throughout the West. Mrs. Birt ascertained that her children would be welcomed in any of the Western Provinces, and in Winnipeg a committee of eighteen prominent citizens was formed to assist in establishing a distributing centre there. The Provincial Government and the city of Winnipeg each promised to vote an annual grant towards the upkeep of the Home, the Dominion Government were willing to contribute \$5 a head towards the railway fares, and held at her option for several years a site of three acres of land in the city which they proposed to grant for a Home; this site to-day must have immensely appreciated in value. Unfortunately these efforts were of no avail; the

Committee at home, no doubt acting as seemed best at the time, did not approve of any extension westward at that date. So good an opportunity will never recur.

This was the first of several trips Mrs. Birt made to the West, by means of which she was enabled to observe the growth and development of that vast country. At intervals of about five years one sees the towns and villages double in size, the rough farm buildings and shacks giving place to handsome houses and commodious barns. In the cities one sees fine churches and boulevarded streets, and the municipalities soon provide good water and electric services. Altogether one's impression of the West is of a country where people are very much alive, alert and progressive.

Many of the "Home" boys have "made good" on the prairies after serving their apprenticeship in Quebec or Ontario and saving a little money. One such has his free grant of 160 acres located near the farm of the Canadian family who adopted him and have brought him up since he was five years of age. He moved out West with them seven years ago. By working at the coal-mines, or at a saw-mill,

he accumulated sufficient capital to buy stock and build a house. He paid ten dollars entrance fee, and the farm is worth \$3000 to-day. Church services are held once a fortnight in the schoolhouse, and this young man assists the minister and sometimes leads the prayer meeting in his absence.

Another young man, who went to the same district three years ago with several friends, has a farm in an excellent position. When he located there it was eighty miles from the nearest railroad; a branch line soon ran to within fifteen miles; and to-day a new station is open within three miles of his farm. He has some good stock and a nice little house; and in his neighbourhood also services are held in a schoolhouse, and the people are looking forward to the time when they will have a settled minister.

Only last summer W. H. R. from Kensington Union, aged eighteen, obtained a homestead, 160 acres free and pre-empted 160 acres more at very low price, 320 acres in all, of good land within five miles of railway station, grain elevator and post-office.

CHAPTER VIII
DEVELOPMENT IN LIVERPOOL

“Thou art no child of the City,
Hadst thou known it as I have done
Thou wouldst not have smiled in pity,
As if joy were with thee alone.

.
You may call it life's dusty common,
At best but an idle fair ;
The market of man and woman,
But the choice of the race are there.

And the Home to which I'm hasting
Is not in some silent glen ;
The place where my hopes are resting
Is a city of living men.

The crowds are there, but the sadness
Is gone with the toil and sin ;
Nought is heard but the song of gladness,
’Tis the City of holy men.”

H. BONAR.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPMENT IN LIVERPOOL

FOR five years (from 1878 to 1883) Mrs. Birt lived altogether on the premises at Byrom Street.

The weight of responsibility together with the local conditions—the terrible noises at night, and the bad air—combined to produce that insomnia from which she suffered for thirty years. This led to a partial breakdown in health in 1881. For three weeks she scarcely slept at all, suffering agonies from neuralgia. Mr. Balfour, who was always on the watch to come to the rescue where he saw Christian workers breaking down, arranged for Mrs. Birt and Miss Macpherson to go a trip to the Mediterranean. The rest and change of scene were completely successful in restoring her to her usual health.

Mr. Balfour had a cottage on his estate at Mount Alyn, Rossett, known as the "Minister's Cottage," where ministerial friends and their families were invited to share the beautiful sur-

roundings and enjoy a country rest away from the city's din. This cottage was a means of rest and refreshment to Mrs. Birt and her workers at times. Several other cottages on the estate were set aside for the benefit of the Scripture readers and city missionaries of Liverpool.

The income of the clergy in poor parishes and of many other social workers is often too small to allow of much change of scene or holiday expenditure, and therefore such kindness as Mr. Balfour's, always thoughtfully and delicately offered, is one of the finest exercises of Christian benevolence, for it may be the means of restoring and extending lives which can render valuable services to humanity.

Mr. William Rathbone, M.P., also had one or two houses at Parkgate which he placed at the disposal of the clergy and Scripture readers of Liverpool for holiday purposes.

A lady took up the cause of the young teachers and pupil teachers in the elementary schools, who were greatly overworked at that period; she provided lodgings near her country-house at Windermere, to which she invited them in their holidays. Such unobtrusive and often secret kindnesses as these are a beautiful use of wealth.



MRS. BIRT, 1881

During these years Mrs. Birt assisted Mr. Samuel Smith in several undertakings which he hoped would benefit Liverpool. The first of these was the visitation of the young women employed in the various shops of the town. Mr. and Mrs. Smith entertained party after party to charming suppers at one of the best restaurants in town, spending a social evening afterwards with music, singing and addresses. All classes of young women were entertained in turn, from the chief assistants in the best establishments down to the girls of the tobacco factories and rope-walks. Mrs. Birt was the bearer personally of many, if not most of these invitations, and for a time held a Sunday Bible Class among the young women, who became interested in religious things through these gatherings.

This effort on Mr. and Mrs. Smith's part to get to know the young working women and their needs laid the foundations for the work Mrs. Stephen Menzies afterwards so successfully carried on at Gordon Hall, Blackburn Place.

Mr. Smith also made an experiment in renting Kelly's Theatre, Paradise Street, then called the "Colosseum," and providing entertainments free from objectionable features for the masses on

week-nights; while on Sunday evenings he started Evangelistic services in the theatre.

The pure entertainment part was not successful and was soon dropped, but the Sunday evening services have been continued regularly ever since. On the first Sunday night Annie Macpherson (who was on a visit to Liverpool and staying with her sister, Mrs. Birt), Mr. Andrew Kyd of London, P. P. Williams of the Mersey Dock Board, and others took the big dinner-bell of the old Home in Byrom Street and marched along Whitechapel to the theatre, singing and ringing the bell to attract an audience.

Mrs. Birt played the harmonium and led the singing for some years at these services until the draughty stage and the strain of the big hall affected her voice. In a short time these Sunday evening services were packed with the "submerged tenth" of Liverpool, grateful for the warmth, light and shelter, and for the penny loaf distributed after the service; but also benefited and grateful for the human sympathy and the brotherly hand of help held out by their sincere and devoted friend, Mr. Smith.

It was a source of disturbance at first that so many children crowded in, attracted like their

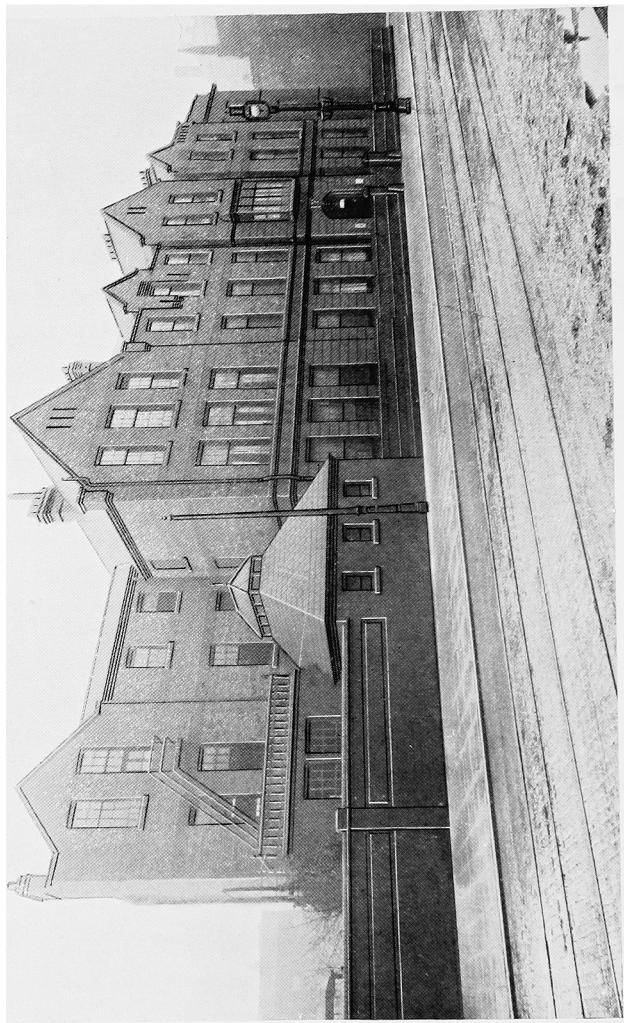
elders by what was going on in the old theatre. Mrs. Birt suggested gathering the children into a large room at the top of the building, and thus originated the Colosseum Sunday School. Mr. Smith readily agreed to give the children also a loaf each. Mr. Lucas P. Stubbs was the first superintendent; he was a self-taught artist, and used to paint a large picture to illustrate each week's lesson. He was followed by Mr. P. P. Williams, who in time was succeeded by Mr. Tom Williams, to whose energy and enthusiasm the school owes its very interesting later developments, having become a centre of club-life and ambulance work among the children.

By 1883 it had become clear that the situation of the Home in Byrom Street left much to be desired as a Training Home for children.

Dr. D. M. Williams, the Hon. Physician to the Home, pointed out that the sanitary conditions were imperfect and that the health of the inmates rendered removal to a healthier site desirable.

Mr. John Houghton not only lent the premises in Byrom Street free, but paid rates, gas, cleaning and all such expenses, and the Home owed much to his help and encouragement. He was a most

generous man, and freely supported all charitable efforts which came under his notice ; while having practically retired from business, he loved to spend his days at the Home among the poor, hearing their troubles and helping the poor people personally. He always kept a pocket full of silver change to give to the street boys and girls, and in consequence there was always a row of beggars outside his office door awaiting his going in and out. But after his death in 1883 rent had to be paid to his executors. The committee therefore resolved that as soon as means would allow a suitable Home should be erected in a more healthy situation. Meantime they rented No. 1 Sugnall Street as a Home for little girls. The first donation for a new Home came from Mr. Henry Cox. In December 1884 a Bazaar was held in St. George's Hall, which was most liberally supported by Liverpool and Cheshire ladies. Including donations collected in the following years a sum of £11,000 was raised, and in 1888 the committee felt warranted in purchasing the Sugnall Street premises and half the land adjoining on Myrtle Street. The foundation stone of the new Home was laid by Mrs. Stephen Williamson, wife of the President,



LIVERPOOL SHELTERING HOMES, MYRTLE STREET

in 1888, and the Sheltering Home, Myrtle Street, was opened on November 16, 1889, by Mrs. Alexander Balfour. Twelve hundred friends were present on the latter occasion.

In 1895 an anonymous friend presented the Home with the remaining portion of the block of land on Myrtle Street, to be used as a playground for the children, and to be kept as an open space. This noble gift was worth £3000.

Another friend, Mrs. Lundie, fitted up the playground with swings, drinking fountain and shrubberies in memory of the Rev. R. H. Lundie, D.D. Mr. Stephen Williamson, M.P., who had already given handsomely towards the Building Fund, gave the wall which enclosed the new property. It was one of his last benefactions to the institution to which he devoted so much fostering care. During the thirty years he was President of the Sheltering Homes he was never too busy to attend to any matter on which counsel or advice were required; while if funds ran short, his cheque was always ready. He was a generous giver to so many other causes that, when he wanted assistance for this work in which he took special interest, it was a churlish friend indeed who would refuse to lend a helping

hand. Mr. Williamson's wife was a daughter of the Rev. Thos. Guthrie, D.D., of Edinburgh, the founder of the Edinburgh Original Ragged Schools. Perhaps it was owing to this close association with such an ardent friend of the poor ragged children that Mr. Williamson's interest in the destitute little children of Liverpool became so deep and lasting. Dr. Guthrie always said that nothing pleased him more than to hear that it had been arranged to give one of his Ragged School boys a start abroad in one of the colonies—many from the schools he established in Edinburgh had been sent to Canada through Miss Macpherson. He used to say "God never meant children to be brought up in flocks, but in families."

Mr. Williamson's death in June 1903 was a great loss to the Homes. His successors in the Presidency, the Rt. Hon. Samuel Smith, M.P., and later Mr. James Smith, J.P., did not survive him long.

The President now is Mr. Williamson's eldest son, Sir Archibald Williamson, Bart., M.P. Though the original fourteen members of the committee have all passed to their reward, it is with satisfaction the Sheltering Homes can reckon

among its present committee several of the sons of former members. It is the pride of Liverpool that successive generations of her distinguished citizens are in so many cases following in their father's footsteps, sparing neither time nor money in furthering any good work that tends to the welfare and improvement of the city. A notable example has been set by the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Derby in accepting the Lord Mayoralty of the city for 1912.

THE WIDOWS' SEWING-CLASS

There remain two interesting branches of the work in Liverpool to mention.

The Widows' Sewing-class was started in 1879 on the lines of the classes held by Miss Macpherson in London. It differed from those in that it was supported entirely by the beneficence of one kind friend, Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., who not only provided the funds to employ 300 women, paying them sixpence for two hours' sewing and providing them with a meat tea, but also for many years spared the time to come every week throughout the winter and cheer them with an address and prayer.

A number of ladies took charge of the sewing, having about twenty women in each class, and they became deeply interested in helping the poor old widows in many ways.

The sewing given was such portions of the children's outfits as the old people with failing eyesight and fingers crippled with rheumatism could manage.

It was the bright spot in the existence of many struggling and lonely widows. The gift of an old pair of boots or spectacles or a black bonnet was a boon to these poor creatures.

One said: "With the sixpence I earn at the Home I buy a ha'porth of tea, a ha'porth of sugar, a ha'porth of drippin', a ha'porth of wood, and a penn'orth of bread. I get a quarter hundredweight of coals at a time if I can, because I *save a farthing* by getting the quarter hundredweight, and that lasts me a long time; with the farthing I get a drop of milk. I sometimes buy a penn'orth of wood from the coopers and chop it myself, I can make it go farther that way."

After Mr. Smith died the Sewing-class was dropped, and not long afterwards the "Old Age Pensions" proved a boon for the old women

over seventy, which had long been desired on their behalf. A Christmas gathering of those who are left is still held annually, and they are presented with a warm garment and a good meal and other Christmas cheer. The number is now reduced to eighty.

The original class at the Home of Industry, 29 Bethnal Green Road, London, N., is continued there, for it is found that there is still room for benevolence among the younger widows, whose children are admitted to the Home, and the women under seventy years of age, who find it a terrible struggle to keep out of the workhouse until their age entitles them to the Old Age Pension.

The following is a true story of one of the aged widows:

THE STORY OF A LIVERPOOL WIDOW

It was a poor match when the Hanson's daughter married young Beech. He was only an artist; but then he painted so well, and really he could get quite a price for his landscapes—yes, you see them sometimes on the walls of Liverpool homes to-day—he was steady

and well-principled, and the young people were so fond of one another. So they started life together full of love and hope and happiness. They got along with ups and downs for many years, but always kept a decent home and paid their taxes. They had several children, two sons; the father taught them to be artists too, only unfortunately they had not the same talent for it he had. They never got to be much more than just copyists, and they married early and soon had more than they could do to keep themselves and families, and had nothing to spare to help their parents as they grew old. It became a harder struggle for Beech and his wife year by year. Beech soon grew into an old man, with the worry and care of it—but they attended church regularly, and when they got too shabby for that they dropped into a mission. To hear old Beech talk about his Father in Heaven made you feel like a child yourself sometimes. He always seemed sure that the Lord would help him out, and his sweet old wife was cheery and happy over such small mercies.

But at last old Beech died. On his knees, while he was praying, "he slipt awa' hame." It almost broke the old lady up entirely. They

had been so fond of one another, all the way through—‘for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health’ they had faced life together, but now she was alone. She had to leave the house and go into lodgings with her little grandson, a daughter’s child. The daughter had made an unfortunate marriage (none of the Beeches were lucky) and had been deserted by her husband. She went into service and helped her mother with what she could spare, and friends gave the old woman a little sewing. But she soon got too weak and shaky to come around to their houses for the bit of sewing or the meal they were generally willing to give her if she obtruded herself on their remembrance. She tried to get into the almshouses, but failed. The daughter too got under the influence of the Salvation Army. This would be good, one would think, for the girl was somewhat weak in character, and, being young and deserted by her husband, any good influence that would keep her in the path of duty was to be desired. But Ellen got inspired with the idea of devoting her life as a soldier in the Army. She threw up her situation, and joined the Army to go around the streets singing and preaching. She

earned no wages from them, only a bare living out of the collections, and consequently she could not help her mother and son. She was soon worn out by the hard life and died in hospital. It was with difficulty a shilling or two could be dragged out of the two sons.

The old lady now took to sending her grandson round to ask for assistance—frankly, she taught him to be a beggar—at last she got so feeble that she could not keep herself or her room clean. Friends tried to persuade her to go into the workhouse, but her pride revolted against this, and she resisted as long as she was able. At last the sanitary authorities, or some other authority, interfered and took her away to the Union. Friends occasionally, remembering her there, would send a shilling's worth of stamps to buy a bit of tea or purchase some little service or kindness from the other paupers; and so at last she died alone, forsaken in her weakness and old age, a good woman all her days, quite a lady in all her ways. Oh, if only there had been an aged widows' pension fund to give her five shillings a week in her time of need, the end of her life might have been contented and peaceful, in comparison with the lonely misery she suffered.

THE ROBINS' CHRISTMAS DINNER

From 1873 onwards Mrs. Birt gathered at Christmas as many of the poor, ragged children of the streets as could be accommodated in Byrom Hall, and gave them a good dinner and some toy or garment or book as a present.

It was not long before the hall was filled twice in the day.

In 1885 the Finance Committee of the City Council granted the free use of St. George's Hall, the noblest building in Liverpool, for the accommodation of the children, a privilege which has been most kindly continued up to the present.

The tickets are distributed through the clergy and city missionaries in the poorest parishes to the poorest children who can be found. The hall is filled twice, at noon and three o'clock, while the meal is sent to halls at a considerable distance for another thousand. Altogether five thousand are fed and cheered at Christmas time.

Mrs. Birt has had the help of a great many friends in organising and carrying out this rather onerous responsibility of assembling so many children at the wintry season of the year.

The late Mr. Robert Jackson acted as President of the Robins' Dinner Committee and Superintendent, and since his lamented death Mr. C. J. Williamson has acted as President, and Mr. Alexander Armstrong, F.R.G.S., has undertaken the management in the Hall. The gratifying order and success of the function could not have been maintained without the very many helpers who have given service on these days. The Lord Mayor of the city always visits the Treat wearing his chain of office, to the delight of the little guests.

One can call to mind many interesting cases of waifs who, hearing at this dinner about the Homes, have afterwards sought admission. But these cases have not been nearly so many as one would have anticipated; and experience points to the conclusion that almost all these unkempt, ragged children who are seen on the streets have parents living. If they were fatherless, or real "waifs and strays," they would quickly find a refuge and a Home. It is the parents who must be dealt with if the streets of Liverpool are to be cleared of the reproach of so many wretched-looking children.

The following is an analysis of one of the



ROBINS' CHRISTMAS DINNER GUESTS

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emigration parties, showing the proportion of orphans to those badly treated or deserted by parents :

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Orphans	7	16	23
Motherless	14	13	27
Fatherless	4	5	9
Illegitimate	4	1	5
Parents living	8	10	18
Motherless, deserted by father	2	2	4
Fatherless, deserted by mother	1	2	3
Deserted by both parents	2	0	2
Deserted by father, mother living	2	8	10
Deserted by mother, father living	1	3	4
Deserted by father, mother living but paralysed	1	1	2

TWO LIVERPOOL ROBINS; OR, HOW JOHN SAVED HIS MOTHER

In 1891 a poor family in Liverpool were bereaved of their father. The mother was left with seven children to support. Upon the whole she was a decent, hard-working woman, but she was in the habit of giving way to drink, and though unduly burdened with her large family of little ones, yet this habit rendered the home worse than it need have been.

The children attended Earle Road Board School and Earle Road Presbyterian Sunday

School. At Christmas two of them had tickets given them for the Robins' Christmas Dinner in St. George's Hall. There they heard about the Sheltering Home, and besought their mother to bring them to Mrs. Birt. When Mrs. Birt saw them she consented to take John and a little sister to Canada, and obtained shelter for Alice and Jane, the twins, in Miss Hornby's private Home.

Violet the sister, who sang like a bird, was adopted by good farmers whose three little girls had died, and who longed to hear the music of a childish voice in their empty home once more. John found a home in a pleasant part of Canada overlooking a beautiful lake.

The young farmer and his wife who took him had themselves been inmates of the Sheltering Home. They had grown up together on this farmstead and had married, and had been bequeathed the farm at the death of their foster-parents. John went to school all through the long Canadian winter, but in the summer he worked on the farm, growing strong and healthy. As he got older his wages were increased, until at the age of twenty he had £50 saved.

John now decided to take a trip back to

England to see what he could do for his mother and the rest of the family. His first visit was to Mrs. Birt at the Home to tell her what he purposed doing ; he deposited most of his money in her hands for safe keeping, and went off to look up his family. Alas ! John's mother had been led very far astray through drink. A lodger whose help she looked for had deceived and betrayed her, and left her with another infant to provide for. She lost her places of work, felt disgraced in the sight of her friends, and removed to another town.

John wrote to Mrs. Birt describing the scene when he arrived :

“It was a good thing I took your advice and left my money in your care. When I arrived here I found my mother and the children living in one wretched room, with hardly any furniture or clothing. In fact, I had to go out and purchase food before we could have a meal. I am now anxious to get them all out to Canada as soon as possible.”

He got them nicely rigged out in good clothing, and brought them to the Sheltering Home before sailing. Mrs. Birt undertook to provide for the little half-sister, then about eight years old, so that John was relieved of her expenses. Some

inquiries were made as to what John proposed to do with them all when they arrived in Canada. "Oh," he said, "my master and mistress want them all to come to our house and stay until they get situations." In fact the generous couple did throw open their home to the family, and speedily they all got situations at good pay.

Now John is married and owns a comfortable home. He is a landscape gardener, employing from forty to sixty men. He recently came up from Boston in his own motor car to visit the friends in the white farmhouse on the hill overlooking the lake where his young days were spent. Alice and Jane, the twins, are both well married. Alice now lives in British Columbia, where the mother with her youngest child also are doing well. The changed environment and brighter life have strengthened her so that she has never needed drink out there.

Violet, who as mentioned before was adopted by well-to-do farmers, married their nephew and inherits the property.

Mrs. Birt found good foster-parents for the little half-sister, and she is now married and in happy circumstances.

CHAPTER IX

TRAINING IN THE HOME—PLACING OUT IN CANADA—SUPERVISION

“ Every day is a fresh beginning,
Every morn is the world made new,
You who are weary of sorrow and sinning,
Here is a beautiful hope for you—
A hope for me, and a hope for you.

All the past things are past and over,
The tasks are done, and the tears are shed.
Yesterday's errors let yesterday cover ;
Yesterday's wounds, which smarted and bled,
Are healed with the healing which night hath shed.”

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

CHAPTER IX

TRAINING IN THE HOME—PLACING OUT IN CANADA—SUPERVISION

THE children are given a training of about six months in the Liverpool Home. This enables the teachers to study the children's characters; any who are morally or physically unsuited for emigration have to be weeded out, as the Canadian Government insists on a careful inspection of these juveniles before they sail. Mrs. Birt has always been open to new ideas regarding methods of education, and from time to time has introduced special subjects to train the children better for colonial life. Besides instruction in Holy Scripture and the usual elementary school subjects, classes are held in cookery, laundry work, sewing, and cutting out. A kindergarten teacher instructs the girls of twelve to fourteen years of age in kindergarten methods of amusing and teaching the little ones, for the purpose of training these older ones to be helpful as nursemaids in future.

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The boys learn something of carpentry, swimming, and stable work.

Mr. C. W. Elam, M.R.C.V.S., has sent the following description of the classes he takes among the boys :

“DEAR MRS. BIRT,—I instruct the boys you send me in the general anatomy and structure of the horse, cow, pig, and sheep ; how to cleanse, water and feed them, and at all times to be kind and gentle to all animals and make them their friends.

“I also teach them how to detect slight injuries to a horse's hoof, and how to apply simple measures for their relief. I also take them to a stable and make them harness and unharness horses, and hitch them to a conveyance, with many practical hints how to handle and drive them.

“They also attend a large dairy where they have to clean the shippin, feed and water the cows, and help in the milking.

“By this means, when the lads go to farms in Canada, they are able at once to make themselves useful in the daily routine.—I am, yours truly,
C. W. ELAM, M.R.C.V.S.”

The children are permitted the privilege of attending the Gymnasium twice a week, where their physical culture is cared for. Singing and recitation are also taught. The many varied and interesting occupations provided for the inmates fully explain their bright happy faces and intelligent appearance.

The meals are of a varied and nourishing character. So many of the children when admitted are in an underfed, half-starved condition, that good feeding is very necessary to bring them up to a good standard of health previous to passing the emigration inspectors.

While the children are undergoing training their outfits are being prepared. A band of boys is usually sent to Canada in February, and other parties of girls or boys follow later in the spring. The public in Canada are notified through the papers of the date when a party will arrive, and applications begin to pour in at the Knowlton Home. Careful inquiries are made into the position and character of each applicant, and the Superintendent at Knowlton selects out of the hundreds of applications those which appear to be the most suitable. When the band arrives, Mrs. Birt or the agent in

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charge of the party carefully goes over the lists with the Superintendent at Knowlton ; the first applications to be considered are those where brothers and sisters are asked for, or where children can be located near brothers and sisters who are already in Canada. Then requests for adoptions are considered, and finally applications for the older ones for service. About 1000 applications are received each year for the children.

A few busy weeks are spent seeing all settled in their new homes and contracts signed for schooling or wages.

A GUIDING HAND

Often in placing out the children the hand of God seems to overrule and guide in their disposal. A farmer in Nova Scotia applied for a brother and sister, and a pair that seemed suitable in age were sent in answer to his requirements. When the children arrived at the farm, the first question put to them was naturally, "What are your names?" The girl's name, Annie Maclaren, struck on the wife's ears with a well remembered but long unheard sound. It was the name of her youngest sister, who had years ago run away from their home in the

North of Ireland and married a sailor. The farmer's wife questioned the children and wrote to the Home for confirmation of their story. They were a sailor's orphans. Annie had been in the Seamen's Orphanage, Liverpool, and when the mother died of consumption the little brother Johnnie had been taken to the Sheltering Home. When Johnnie was to be taken to Canada, Annie had pleaded to be allowed to go with him. There were no known relatives, so no objection was raised. And in God's wonderful providence they were sent all unknown by the human instruments to the dwelling of their mother's eldest sister.

When last seen by Mrs. Birt, Annie was married and in a good comfortable little home of her own. She proudly exhibited her little son Victor, so called because born on Queen Victoria's birthday. Annie's brother is also married and getting along well in life.

Another striking instance of divine leading was shown in the case of Peter W., adopted in Canada by a good farmer and his wife whose only son had died. Peter's name and appearance reminded them of a young sailor lad who had come to their seaport in Nova Scotia some years

previously and had died there unexpectedly. On his deathbed he had murmured words of sorrow and repentance for having run away from home and a widowed mother in Liverpool. Little Peter told them of a long-lost brother, so they wrote to the poor mother in Liverpool, telling in kindly words of the strange coincidence, and asking if this sailor lad whom they had carefully tended and laid to rest with reverent care in their little cemetery could have been her lost son. Alas! the message arrived too late to comfort the mother in this world: she had died a fortnight previously in the workhouse. But surely, if from above her spirit could look down, she would rejoice to see that her youngest darling had found home, love, and care with the same good friends who had shown so much kindness to her elder son and had soothed his dying moments.

Sometimes there are children obviously plain and dull who remain unchosen while the rest of the party are rapidly taken up. It is wonderful how some of these unattractive ones have been provided for.

A farmer and his wife on one occasion came for a girl, and after showing them the children in



EN ROUTE. ON BOARD SHIP



EN ROUTE. MOTOR CAR TO NEW HOME

the schoolroom the wife was heard to whisper in an emphatic aside to her husband: "I'll hae yon reid-heided yin or nane, John!" It turned out she thought the hair just matched her husband's. This girl is still in the same home and has been there for thirty-five years. The family would not know how to get along without her.

Another little tot of two years old, very diminutive even for her age, and with a very wizened old-looking face, had remained several months at the Knowlton Home without finding any one to fancy her or love her.

At last one day a farmer's wife came seeking a little girl to adopt, and when she saw wee Maggie she went into raptures over her "dear little *hands*." So Maggie found a warm nest and lived happily in that home till she grew up and married.

Another most delightful phase of the work in Canada is the way in which so many Canadian couples have taken child after child from the Home to rear. Many could be named who have brought up five, six and seven English orphans.

Mr. and Mrs. F. have had seven children from the Knowlton Home, and two Canadian

orphans, besides their own family. Their daughter, Mrs. L., has adopted seven from Mrs. Birt and built a new wing to her house to accommodate the adopted family.

One childless couple arrived at the Home to choose a child. The wife fancied one and the man preferred another; they ended by taking both. After a few days they wrote for an older girl to help look after the little ones, and one was sent to them. When the farmer saw his wife getting the assistance of a nice useful girl, he decided to come to the Home again and get a bigger boy to help him on the farm; but when he called at the Home he found two brothers of his first little boy had just arrived from England. His heart softened to the brothers and he took them both home, and in course of time another member of the same family joined the household. One night Mr. M. arrived home late after a journey, bringing with him a seventh little child. His wife thought she had almost enough, but when he told her the circumstances under which he had found the little fellow, number seven was given a welcome also to the household.

Mr. M. had noticed on the train a rather

melancholy-looking little boy. He spoke to him and drew out his story, which was that he had been adopted, but after a year or two his foster-parents had got a baby of their own; and they did not want him any longer and were sending him back to the Home. His sensitive little heart felt the slight of being returned as unwanted goods, and his quivering lip and tear-filled eyes appealed to good Mr. M. so much that he had gone to the Home with the child and arranged to add him to his family; so there were four brothers and sisters of one family, and three other children from separate families, all living in peace and harmony with these foster-parents, who did not say, like so many childless people, "Oh no! I won't take a child, because if God had meant me to have any He would have given me some of my own." But instead they reasoned, "God has left our home empty that we may nurture and care for some of the orphan children who need just what we can give."

INSPECTION

The children from the Liverpool Sheltering Homes are regularly visited after being settled in Canadian families. Five Government School

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Inspectors assist in this duty, each visiting in his own school inspectorate. Besides their help, a large amount of visiting is done by the staff from the Home; wherever possible ladies are sent to visit the girls.

The ministers are also informed of every child placed in their districts, and asked to visit and see that the child attends church and Sunday school. Very cordial co-operation has been met with in this way from the ministers of Canada. The other Homes also carry out regular inspection of their wards.

Rev. E. M. Taylor, M.A., who visits the children in certain counties, sends a report on thirty-two he has seen within the last month, having previously reported on eighty. Mr. Taylor says he has not found one unprovided with warm and comfortable clothing suitable for the Canadian winter. The amount expended in clothing yearly on each child ranged from £4 to £9, according to age, the mistress usually doing all the sewing and making free of charge. In almost every instance the child has a room and bed to itself and attends school part of the year.

This supervision and the revising of the contracts annually involves a large correspondence;

if Tommy is reported as not making a sufficient number of days' attendance at day school the Home wants to know the reason; if Nellie is reported as having a pain sometimes in her left foot, the Home writes to inquire if she may be suffering from "flat-foot" and suggests consulting a doctor. One boy desires to know all about his mother (who has not been heard of for ten or perhaps twenty years). A young woman wishes to know if a friend can be helped out to Canada in the same way she came. Mr. B. writes to say he is removing to the Northwest; may he take John with him? Mrs. S. writes to say that the little girl she adopted is going to be married, and according to the civil law of Quebec it is necessary to have Mrs. Birt's consent in writing, because Alice is still under twenty-one.

The children keep up a large correspondence with Mrs. Birt and the Home friends, which alone might occupy one person's time.

GOVERNMENT SUPERVISION IN CANADA

The Canadian Government has always been interested in this juvenile immigration, and from

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time to time has instituted inquiries by its officials into the manner in which it is being conducted and the success which has attended the system.

In 1874 a Government inquiry was made.

Again in 1878 Commissioners were appointed to inquire into the well-being and conduct of these young emigrants.

The Hon. John Lowe, then Deputy-Minister of Agriculture, wrote to Mrs. Birt :

“ OTTAWA, *December 4, 1880.*

“In the first place let me tell you, madam, that I have especially, and the Department has generally, a very high appreciation of the value of your work. In fact, I find it beneficent to the children themselves, and an advantage to this country; while at the same time it is a relief to the overcrowded population from which they are taken. In these circumstances there has been a desire to afford you every possible facility for the reason that it was felt that your young emigrants were protected and very desirable for the country.”

In 1895 the Dominion Government appointed an Inspector under the Department of the In-

terior charged with a general supervision of all British immigrant children and Distributing Homes.

The Department also undertakes to inspect annually in their situations all Poor Law children and report on their condition to the Local Government Board. This is done at the expense of about £1 per visit, which is contributed by the Boards of Guardians. It is an independent inspection, apart from the visits paid by the agents of the Homes.

The Chief Inspector, Mr. G. Bogue Smart, is an enthusiast in the work.

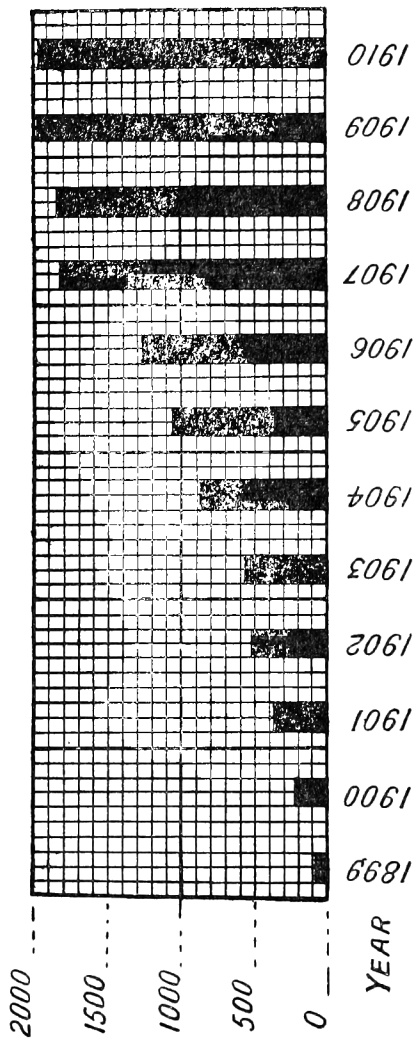
In his report for 1905 he says:

“The past year has been one of unusual activity in this branch of departmental service. Started many years ago in a small way, and promoted unostentatiously, in the face of doubt, discouragement, and adverse criticism, child emigration to Canada has unfolded into an important factor in the Anglo-Saxon immigration into our Dominion. It has successfully passed the experimental stage, and is now generally conceded to be a real benefit, not only to the children, but also to Britain’s chief colony as well. Juvenile immigration assists in filling a

gap in an important branch of our labour market, and numbers of farmers regard the influx of the so-called English Home child as a veritable boon. The desire of their benefactors in the old land is that, as far as possible, the boys should all become Canadian farmers and the girls domestic helps. That this wish has been met in a large measure is borne out by the number of young farmers in the older provinces and Western Canada, who came out to this country as children under the auspices of the various societies, and have prospered. There has been a steady stream of juvenile immigrants this year, and notwithstanding this, it would appear from my information that the total number of arrivals has proved inadequate to the demands. In the main I regard this demand as due to the increasing popularity of the Home boy."

Mrs. Birt has studiously endeavoured to keep the record of the children in Canada clear and free of stain or reproach. After a child is once admitted to the Home no reference is allowed to be made to its past history. As few details as possible that are in any way prejudicial are passed on to Canada. Any children who misbehave are taken back to the Home again and not allowed

*NUMBER OF CHILDREN FROM POOR LAW SCHOOLS
IN GREAT BRITAIN INSPECTED & REPORTED
UPON ANNUALLY SINCE THE YEAR 1899*



to wander from place to place destroying the good reputation of the Home children. In the last resort, incorrigible cases are returned to England so that they may not become a reproach or a byword in Canada.

In spite of this scrupulous care, there are ignorant and jealous persons in Canada who will make it a reproach to these young people in some cases that they came from a "Home," and in some instances it really would be detrimental to the young men and women to publish the fact that they were "Home" children.

Their feelings and prospects in such cases must be considered, and hence it would be most unfair to give, even now, names or particulars of those who have taken prominent positions, as the following story will show :

"One of the boys admitted by Mrs. Birt was Jack Mann (of course this is an assumed name), who had started out to maintain himself and if possible assist his family by selling newspapers on the streets. Many a wet, miserable day when passers-by, hurrying to get under shelter, would not pause long enough to find the copper for a paper, he could not make sufficient to pay for the papers he had taken. His clothing fell into

rags and he could not replace the tattered garments. Many a night he had not sufficient to pay for a bed, '4d. clean and 3d. if dirty,' as the boys used to tell Mrs. Birt. On such nights he would sleep in an empty barrel or under a railway arch or in some shed in a back-yard. He had had no shelter for more than three weeks when he heard from a poor widow about the Home, and very bashfully applied for admission. It was ascertained that his story, like hundreds of others at that date, was quite true; his parents were poor but respectable—want of work had brought them down until one poor room and starvation fare had led to their eldest boy seeking a living on the streets and lodging anywhere he could get.

"Jack was taken into the Home and proved a willing, intelligent boy, anxious to do anything to oblige and help. When taken to Canada, Jack found a place in the home of a lawyer, the son of a Canadian senator. The gentleman took a great liking to the boy, and soon began to assist him to get an education, promising to take him into his own office when fit. Jack worked hard and persevered in his studies after his day's 'chores' were done. Often he was so

weary he would fall asleep over his books by the lamplight, but his determination overcame all obstacles ; he earned enough to go to college. In the long summer vacations he would go on to a farm and earn big wages during the haying and harvest months.

“At last he took his degree and obtained the coveted post in his first master’s law office. From that time he rose rapidly ; going out West he started in another town for himself. Then came the temptation of his life. Jack was intensely proud. Unkind and jealous people would make remarks about his being ‘nothing but an emigrant.’ This removal from the locality where he had first been placed, and from his patron and the friends at the Home, gave Jack the opportunity of dropping his connection with them. He decided not to acknowledge that he was one of the Home boys. He met a young lady, belonging to a wealthy family, whom he married ; his practice increased, his name was recommended to be made a King’s Counsel, and he was appointed district judge.”

There are many who like Jack cannot stand the sneers of Canadians at their having come as emigrants through some Home.

HON. GEORGE E. FOSTER—SPEECH

13th June 1912

The Hon. George E. Foster, Canadian Minister of Trade and Commerce, said, at a luncheon given by the Royal Colonial Institute in London, that he wished the word "emigrant" could be buried. Why not describe a man who left one portion of the Empire for another by merely saying he had moved? A man's status as a citizen should not be changed through the mere fact of moving from one part of the Empire to the other.

Many, indeed most of the young people, will welcome correspondence and visits from their friends of the Home; but when they can stand alone and look after themselves it is wiser to leave them to be absorbed in the ordinary population. They know where to write if at any time they wish to let their old benefactors know how they are prospering.

Only last spring one young man invited Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Merry to his marriage. He holds a very good position, and the wedding was a very grand affair. At the reception Mrs. Merry said to him, "John, it was very good

of you to invite us here, but I hesitated to come, lest the fact that you were connected with the Home might prove embarrassing to you." He replied, "You and Mr. Merry are the most honoured guests here, and I hope I will never be ashamed of the Home and the friends who have done so much for me."

CHAPTER X

SLOW FRUITION OF THE SEED

“God never intended children to be brought up in flocks,
but in families.”—REV. THOS. GUTHRIE, D.D.

CHAPTER X

SLOW FRUITION OF THE SEED

MRS. BIRT'S work in Liverpool has proved fruitful in suggesting other efforts for the good of poor children. The Roman Catholic Children's Emigration Society was started at the suggestion of two of the Sheltering Home Committee, who promised to contribute if the Roman Catholics would open a Home for the needy children of their own creed. They now emigrate about four hundred children yearly from all over the country.

Mrs. Birt also helped with advice in the inception of the Christ-Church Homes for little Boys and Girls, Claughton, Birkenhead, and spoke at a drawing-room meeting where the scheme first took shape.

The Christ-Church Homes have given a training and education to a number of young children, and many of their wards have been placed out in Canada through the aid of the

Sheltering Homes. Cottage Homes like these, under the influence of motherly Christian women, were what Mrs. Birt and Miss Macpherson longed to see multiplied.

Miss Macpherson wrote:

“It is not always in the power of large institutions to draw out the hearts of children; but *families* of children under the care of women influenced by the love of Jesus, not only leaven for good the children and their belongings, but, by thus rescuing the blighted buds, relieve the oppressed and toiling widows.”

The influence of the Sheltering Home has even extended as far as Valparaiso, where a Home has been founded to care for the orphan children of English parents, and given the name of the “Sheltering Home.” From Valparaiso also come subscriptions towards the support of the Liverpool Home.

THE LIVERPOOL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Birt had been demonstrating the value of child-emigration for twenty years in Liverpool before the Liverpool Education Authorities awoke to the fact that by this means they could

provide the most hopeful outlet for a number of the children under their control in Industrial Schools.

In 1883 Mr. Alexander Balfour had visited the Knowlton Home to investigate the Canadian side for himself, and from thence had written to Mr. Samuel Rathbone, the Chairman of the Liverpool School Board, strongly urging that the School Board should take up the question of emigration and send out some of the very neglected children whom they were with great difficulty at that period gathering into day schools.

Mr. Samuel Rathbone immediately visited the Sheltering Home and made full inquiries. He heartily approved of the work, and placed a considerable sum of money at the disposal of the School Board to be used for the emigration of suitable cases.

Yet it was not until 1892 that the School Board began to emigrate children. Since the Education Committee took up the work of the defunct School Board, a Sub-committee on Industrial Schools has been appointed, which during the last twenty years has emigrated 1116 children. Half of these are Roman Catholic

children who are emigrated through the Roman Catholic Emigration Society; the Protestant children since 1900 have been emigrated through the Sheltering Homes.

These children have been committed to the Industrial Schools until sixteen years of age.¹ They have all been under training in these schools for some years.

THE SAVING TO THE RATES

Taking the average age of these 1116 children at the time of emigration as thirteen years, and the cost of emigration at £12 per head, and the cost of supervision for five years until eighteen years of age at £3, 2s. 6d. per head, the total cost for 1116 children amounted to £16,879, 10s.

The cost of maintaining the same children in Industrial Schools until sixteen years of age (the full term they are committed for), at £24 per head per annum, would be £80,352, so that the emigration of these cases has saved the community £63,472, 10s.

The Treasury now makes a grant toward

¹ Under the Education Acts and the Children's Charter, 1909. Mostly on account of the neglect of their parents.

the emigration of the Industrial School children of from £4 to £6 per head, so that the local rates are now relieved of about one-third of the cost of emigration.

THE CHILDREN OF THE STATE

Mrs. Birt always took a deep interest in the children dependent on the Poor Law, whom she saw being brought up in huge barrack schools or herded in workhouses, where they associated with the lowest class of the community. Great improvements have been made in the treatment and care of these children of the State during the past few years, but it has taken long and persistent effort to make much impression on officialdom. Voluntary effort must first prove by actual results that sounder schemes are practicable and successful before the State will take them up.

Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., from the time he entered Parliament in 1882, urged upon the Poor Law Authority the policy of emigrating large numbers of these dependent children. Yet for many years the rules and regulations of the Local Government Board made it almost im-

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possible for any voluntary society to undertake their emigration.

In 1903, while the Rt. Hon. Walter Long was President of the Local Government Board, these rules were revised and a circular sent to Boards of Guardians (March 3, 1903), which stated that "*Emigration affords one of the best means for providing satisfactorily for the orphan and deserted children under the care of the Guardians.*"

Since then a gradually increasing number of children have been given a start in Canada by Boards of Guardians through the agency of the various voluntary societies.¹ But only a very small proportion of the number of children dependent on the Poor Law in Great Britain are so dealt with.

In 1911 the numbers dependent were:

Children maintained indoors on Jan. 1	.	71,286
Children on outdoor relief on Jan. 1	.	182,694
		<hr/>
Total		253,980

This shows an increase of 20,000 children dependent on the Poor Law in the last three years.

¹ 745 children were sent to Canada in 1912 by Boards of Guardians, the largest number yet reached in one year.

The Liverpool Sheltering Homes are among the agencies certified by the Local Government Board as approved Homes for the training and emigration of Poor Law children. The Guardians are authorised to defray the expenses of the children they place under its care so that they do not become a charge on the voluntary funds of the Home.

NO SUITABLE LIVERPOOL CHILD IS EVER REFUSED ADMISSION, AND CHILDREN FROM LIVERPOOL AND ITS ENVIRONS ARE ADMITTED FREE, without monetary payment or other interest. The need of voluntary gifts and subscriptions is therefore still urgent for the sake of the many destitute Liverpool children who seek the door of the Sheltering Home in their time of bitter need.

The Home must still preserve its voluntary character and its power of initiative. Nevertheless the committee can reflect with pride that their methods have approved themselves to the country at large, and that the Liverpool Sheltering Homes are becoming recognised as a national institution for drafting children out to the colonies and watching over their adolescence.

BOARDING OUT IN THE DOMINIONS

Over and above the growth in the emigration of poor British children, the most remarkable testimony to the success of Miss Macpherson's methods is the fact that the Governments of the Overseas Dominions have adopted this plan of placing out dependent and neglected children in families instead of retaining them in orphanages or industrial schools.

Canadians themselves recognise that for their own orphan or neglected children this up-bringing among farmers' families produces better results than retaining children in institutions for years. The Provincial Governments have each organised a State Department to place out dependent children on similar methods to those of the English societies.

In Australia such children as fall to the care of the State are boarded out in private families.

Only cases of mental deficiency, physical incapacity or pronounced criminal tendency are detained in Homes, where special skilled attention can be devoted to their improvement.

The State Board of Charities of New York has recognised "that good family homes in the

country and the loving care of foster-parents are better for the development of character than any institutional training."

On the continent of Europe the same ideas were put in practice by Pastor von Bodelswingh. He found it possible to place all the orphans who sought his help with the good peasant farmers around Bielefeldt, who received them as a treasured charge.

In Hungary a most enlightened method of boarding-out dependent and orphan children has been organised, with happy results.

Apart from the absence of blood-relationship, which nothing on earth can fully make up to them, the children thus placed out in families are better off, are happier, and are receiving a better training for life's duties than thousands of children in their own homes.

CANADIAN HOMES FOR LIVERPOOL ORPHANS

Though Lucy's early life in Liverpool began in sadness, yet in the Land of the Maple Leaf joy and prosperity has come to her.

Lucy's father had drifted into drinking habits, and had ceased to love and care for wife or

children. The mother struggled bravely to maintain a shelter for the five children, with the help of the eldest girl, but after the birth of baby Jessie, who was partially paralysed, she was unable to regain strength: how could she, without nourishing food or restful nights? At last her mind gave way under the starvation and hopeless misery of her life, and one morning she went into the back-yard and hanged herself. What a scene and what a sorrow for the children to come upon when they awoke! Poor mother! her love had been the one bit of brightness in their wretched lives, and now she was gone. A neighbour took the miserable little babe and announced her intention of caring for her. For a short time the father tried to do his part by the others, but alas! soon gave way to his intemperate habits, and the family were left in a starving condition. Neighbours, poor as themselves, were powerless to help, and finally a city missionary was appealed to. "Oh!" said he, "I know the very place where these children will be cared for. I was at a Tea-meeting the other night at the Sheltering Home, and kind, motherly Mrs. Birt is the lady who will welcome them." He then proceeded

to describe the Home, with its comfortable sleeping rooms and clean little beds, dining-room, schoolroom and beautiful playground, and all the bonny, happy children, whose smiling faces told of the love and care they were enjoying. "Wouldn't you like to go there?" he asked. "Oh! please, mister, please take us," was the eager answer. With tears in his eyes, he promised to take them right away, if their father would go too, and place them under Mrs. Birt's care. So the father was found, and on a bitter winter's day, when the door-bell of the Sheltering Home was answered, this forlorn tattered little family were waiting admittance. They were ushered into the office, and very soon Mrs. Birt was listening to their sad story. She agreed to take the four little ones: Lucy, aged 13; Johnnie, Willie and little Emily.

The father signed the paper making Mrs. Birt their guardian and agreeing that his children should be taken to Canada. Such a tubbing and combing followed, and our four little transformed friends were soon partaking of a nice warm supper, and then taken to the very beds described so truly by the missionary.

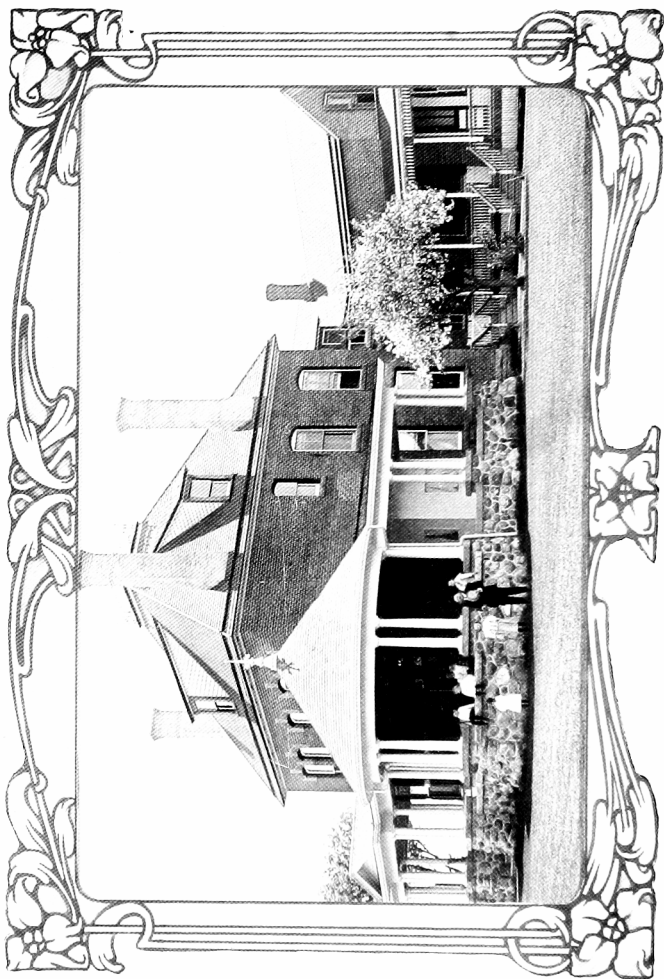
They stayed some months in the Home. Lucy

especially became a clever little maid, and was a favourite with everybody. At last spring came, and there were many mysterious visits to the outfitting room, and lots of nice new clothes were fitted on.

One morning waggonettes came to the door, and Lucy, Emily, Willie and Johnnie, with sixty other happy children, were driven to the landing stage and embarked on the ocean liner for Canada.

After a grand voyage and safe journey up country the Knowlton Home was reached, where a warm welcome awaited them. Before they retired to rest, all gathered in the schoolroom and sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and returned thanks to God for journeying mercies.

Miss Meiklejohn, the lady in charge of the Home, was soon busy arranging for each child. Johnnie and Willie went to live with farmers, and were only a short distance from each other, meeting always at church and school. Little Emily was adopted by a lady and gentleman, and Lucy was taken by a fine Christian family as maid. The choice was never regretted either by Lucy or the family: she remained there seven years, growing more attached to the kind friends



A GIRL'S CANADIAN HOME

who have guided her so gently. She helped to nurse the aged head of the family, and her mistress also, until they passed away. She corresponded with her eldest sister (who had married in the meantime), and helped this sister and her husband out to Canada, where they are now prospering. Still unsatisfied, Lucy wrote to the neighbour who had taken charge of her baby sister, and prevailed on her to take the little one to Mrs. Birt. This was done, and little delicate Jessie was nursed and cared for in the Sheltering Home, taken to Canada, and, to Lucy's joy, found a home with the married sister. Though by emigration it may seem the family is broken up at first, yet in the long run they have a much better hope of being together in prosperity than any other way of helping such cases can hold out. Many other young people who have gone out through the Sheltering Home have sent for their families in a similar way. Lucy is now married and has a happy home of her own. The latest news of her family is given in the following letter :

“MONTREAL, *December 10, 1911.*

“MY DEAR MRS. BIRT,—You will wonder, no doubt, why I have not written for so long. The

truth is, I was not very well, but am fine now and in the best of health. God has blessed me with a beautiful baby boy. I was married four and a half years and thought no darling baby was coming: however, I am now a proud, happy mother. I am as happy as any woman can be; I have a good husband, beautiful baby, and lovely home, surrounded with every love and kindness.

"We are now in a far better position than when Miss Birt visited us three years ago. We have a lovely little home. I wish, dear Mrs. Birt, you or your daughter, or Mr. Drummond could come and pay me a visit. I would love to have you remain for any meal that would suit you. I would indeed feel greatly honoured, as there are no friends who mean so much to me as the dear friends of the Myrtle Street Sheltering Home. Think what you have done!

"My eldest brother, Willie, is a prosperous lumber merchant. Emily is a hospital-trained nurse. Jessie is also doing well. Johnnie is farming away out West. They are all coming (except John) to spend Christmas with me.

"I send you a photo of Emily in her uniform: don't you think she is a bright, intelligent-looking girl? She brings sunshine into many homes.

“Now, dearest Mrs. Birt, once again thanking all the dear friends at the Sheltering Home for all the loving-kindness that they have shown our family and many hundreds of families, I must close with love from one of your old girls,

“LUCY.”

Miss M. L. Hornby, who has sent many children from her small private Home to Canada through Mrs. Birt, writes :

“It has been a great pleasure to see how often other members of the family have followed out to Canada in consequence of one doing well there.

One girl, C. P., who went with Mrs. Birt, was rather small and delicate, and it seemed doubtful if she were quite suitable, but she was a steady, good, reliable girl ; she did well herself, and first an elder sister followed, and then two brothers.

B. R.'s two brothers followed her. The Guardians had been going to send them to work in the coal-mines, but allowed them to go to Canada instead. The result has been most satisfactory. They are all married and in very good positions. The younger of the brothers was returned to the Knowlton Home owing to

death in the family where he was first placed ; the elder boy's master wrote to say he would be glad to take him, as he had been so pleased with the brother. This is not the only case in which the good behaviour of one has opened a way for others.

S. S. was always a nice girl, both in appearance and ways, but rather careless in two situations in Liverpool. In Canada she quite turned over a new leaf. She soon married, and has been an excellent wife and mother. She sent for a married sister, with her husband and child, and lately the husband's brother has followed.

M. B. and her sister and brother all went together and found homes in the same neighbourhood. The sisters are married and doing very well. M. B. married the son of the family into which she was adopted, and I had the pleasure of seeing her father-in-law when he came over to England on business. He went also to see the children's old grandfather and gratified him very much by his account of the young ones.

M. T. is a girl we think of with great pleasure. Her early history was sad in the extreme ; she was rescued from bad surroundings with some difficulty. She had never received any education

till we received her into this Home. Her progress here was wonderfully rapid, and in her new home in Canada she has been lovingly taken into the family, and has done remarkably well at school."

Miss Hornby writes :

"I was always so struck with the way in which, in that large work, dear Mrs. Birt could consider carefully the individual cases; she could decide so quickly, and never seemed fussy or in a hurry. Her help and sympathy with the children I had to do with were invaluable, and I prize her friendship so very much. How well she spoke in public. I am sure her speeches were well considered, but it seemed as if she were simply talking to friends. The girls who went to Canada by means of the Sheltering Home from my Orphanage are many of them comfortably married, and the letters I have from them are very satisfactory, and three boys have done very well."

CHAPTER XI

A MINISTRY OF LOVE—THE SUPPLIES

“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”—ST. PAUL, *Phil.* iv. 19.

CHAPTER XI

A MINISTRY OF LOVE—THE SUPPLIES

MANY people ask how this work among the children has been supported?

It has been maintained by voluntary offerings. From the maid-servant and the poor widow up to the Queen on her throne, many a love-gift has been received, telling of self-denial that the poor children might be helped.

The three sisters and their co-workers believe that these gifts have been sent in answer to prayer. When it is recalled that Dr. Barnardo, William Quarrier, Von Bodelswingh of Germany, and George Müller of Bristol all declare the same experience, these facts should weigh with many who feel doubtful about spiritual verities and the truth of the Bible promises. Annie Macpherson has recorded some of her experiences of answered prayer in connection with supplies for the Lord's work.

From the beginning of the London work a

prayer-meeting was held every Saturday evening at the Home of Industry. God's guidance was sought in every step.

Annie Macpherson said : " The means we have determined to use are daily to ask the Lord to lay our burden upon the hearts of those whom He has made stewards of His silver and gold. We seemed a feeble folk, yet, wonderful to say, whatever we have agreed to ask relative to the work in the East of London has been given to us ; yea, more than we asked." She not only prayed in faith herself ; she taught others to pray. One day, having slipped unseen into the Widows' Sewing-class, she heard one of the widows praying : " Dear Jesus, Thou seest our dear sister Macpherson has got a werry white face, and we don't know what it is, but if it's no odds to Thee, it's great odds to us, so if it's money she's awanting, then give her money ; give her *a thousand pounds*, dear Jesus ; do it for us and we'll thank Thee for ever."

Before the end of that week the Lord had laid it upon the hearts of two gentlemen to send each £500 for the boys going to Canada. The next week Miss Macpherson called the good soul aside and told her that the Lord

had answered her prayer. "Well," she said, "it's just like Him."

About Christmas 1873 Mrs. Merry had been anxious lest the children should be forgotten; the money coming in was spent on necessities and could not be spent on toys, so one day when thinking about them she bent her head down on the table, her face in her hands, and said: "Lord, remember the poor little ones this Christmas." That was all, but how was this prayer answered? Four little girls went to their father and said: "Papa, we don't want to have a Christmas-tree this year." "Don't you?" he replied; "well, then, I'll keep the money in my pocket." "Oh no, papa! We did not mean that; we mean that we will go without a tree ourselves, but we want you to give us the money to send to Miss Macpherson's children that they may have a Christmas-tree." So the father gave them the money, and the boys and girls in the Home had a beautiful tree covered with every sort of thing a child's heart could desire.

On one occasion it was needful to send £100 to the Canadian Home for expenses; prayer was made that the amount might be made up before the next mail-day.

For two days no answer came; on the third morning several donations were received, but £10 was still wanting. It was nearing the time to send off the letters and it had not arrived, but in the last hour before the post closed a young lady called, who said she had become interested in the work some months before through reading a little book given to her at a meeting, and had endeavoured to help by collecting £10, which she had travelled some miles to bring that afternoon.

William Quarrier, founder of the Orphan Homes of Scotland, Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire, had resolved during the bitter struggle of his early years as a poor widow's son that, if God would prosper him, then he would seek out and help the poor street laddies of Glasgow.

God did prosper him and he started a Working Boys' Shoeblack Brigade and a Newsboys' Brigade. But he yearned to establish a Home for Orphans, yet the day seemed far distant when he would have sufficient money to carry out his ambition. He hoped some persons with money would establish such a Home.

In August 1871 Annie Macpherson visited her Glasgow friends. Mr. Quarrier met her

and talked over the needs of the city waifs with her, and mentioned his earnest desire that some one with means would devote himself to the work. Her reply was in effect, "Thou art the man." She encouraged him to begin the work of rescue himself and put his trust in God for the money.

Under this inspiration, in September 1871 he wrote to the papers saying money was needed to open and carry on a Home in which to shelter children, and at the same time he made the subject a matter of prayer, resolving privately that if God would send £2000 (the amount which he considered was needed to start with) in one lump sum, he would take it as a sign that he was to take up the work himself. The sign was granted. Twelve days later the late Mr. Thomas Corbett of London wrote saying he was willing to give £2000 to buy or rent a house for the purpose, and immediately thereafter a beginning was made.

"The National Orphan Homes of Scotland," founded by William Quarrier, now number 78 buildings, including a village of 52 cottages, with school accommodating 1700 children, a church seating 2500, four consumption sanatoria, a colony for epileptics, and a children's hospital.

One of the helpers at the London Training Home relates her first experience of the child-like faith Annie Macpherson had in God's readiness to answer prayer.

Miss Macpherson came in one evening weary and cast down, and gathering the group of children around the fire she sat talking with them. "Children," she said, "I'm very sad and in great trouble to-night. I owe all these bills,—butcher, baker, and others—the total is £75, and I have no money left to pay. What happens to people who cannot pay their bills?"

One sharp and experienced youngster cried out, "Put in prison, miss."

"Well, but these things were all got for you, not for myself; the bills are for your bread, and meat, and boots. Can *you* help me, or can *you* earn anything to pay for them?" she asked.

"No." They all agreed that they could do nothing to help.

"Well," she continued, "I have a very kind Friend who is willing to help me; I'm sure He will if I ask Him. Let us kneel down and ask Him."

Then in simple words children could follow and understand, as if talking to a friend, she

prayed that God would send her £75 to pay these bills.

At tea the weekly copy of *The Christian* was brought in, and when Miss Macpherson turned to the list of donations from readers published at the end there was £75 exactly for the Home of Industry. After tea she went back to the children and said: "Children, what do you do when you feel very pleased and glad about anything?"

"Stand on our heads, miss," shouted one little boy.

Laughing, she said, "Well, I can't do that, but you can; so do it for me, and have a good game."

Then there were high revels in the schoolroom, such as she delighted to set going among the children and take her share in.

When their high spirits had had sufficient outlet she called them to order and said: "Now, children, I will tell you why I am so happy and pleased: my Friend has sent the money, and it is there waiting at the Home of Industry, and I can go and get it and pay all these bills. So let us thank Him before we go to bed."

This incident photographed itself on the

memories of the older children, and was a lesson they and the new worker in the Home never forgot.

H.M. Queen Mary (then Princess May) visited the old Home of Industry several times in the company of her mother, H.R.H. the late Duchess of Teck, who took a deep interest in the work.

When the Home was removed to the present building, 29 Bethnal Green Road, in 1887, H.R.H. the Duchess of Teck promised to perform the opening ceremony.

All preparations were complete—flowers, decorations, a crimson carpet to be laid down at the entrance to make the day a gala one—but a dense fog came on which made traffic in the City dangerous, and at last a telegram arrived to say that Her Royal Highness would not be allowed to come. The disappointment was hard to bear, but Annie Macpherson with her characteristic childlike trust only said: “We shall see God’s hand in it.” True enough, a letter came from Her Royal Highness saying how deeply she felt for all the disappointments and inconvenience that had been inevitable and asking Miss Macpherson to appoint a day for a drawing-room meeting, to

which the Duchess would invite all her friends. Annie Macpherson said afterwards that the interest aroused in the cause as a result of this meeting was far greater than it would probably have been had the original plan been carried out.

In February 1888 the Duchess of Teck fulfilled her promise of visiting the Home at 29 Bethnal Green Road, bringing with her Princess May, now our gracious Queen, and the Crown Princess of Denmark, now the Dowager Queen of Denmark.

The Crown Princess was interested in the Bible Flower Mission, and graciously accepted some patterns of text-cards as she wished to commence a Bible Flower Mission in Copenhagen.

Princess May retained her interest in the Home, and has sent contributions since her marriage.

Only last year a basket of primroses came from H.M. the Queen to the Home for the Flower Mission.

Sophie, the late Queen of Sweden, also visited the Home of Industry, and sent her photograph to Miss Macpherson with a text beautifully illuminated by her own hand.

Annie Macpherson has recorded her experience in regard to speaking in public :

“Not always has the testing of faith been in

connection with *money*, but in *courage* as regards *speaking* and holding of meetings to plead the cause of the orphan children. When overwrought and weak in body this sensitiveness becomes almost an agony. Constant deliverances never seem to remove this difficulty, although on no occasion has the Lord failed to deliver and sustain when childlike trust was reposed in Him. It is only when faced with the needs-be of the children's welfare that this act of faith becomes a pleasure. Then crowds are lost to view, and the theme becomes absorbing and the joy of the Master's approval gives strength."

The sisters had faith also that God would choose and provide the right helpers, and this trust was wonderfully justified. They would be the first to say that without the devoted and whole-hearted service rendered by a united band of co-workers, many of whom gave their services freely, and none of whom ever received more than a small salary, the work could not have prospered as it did or been attended with like good results.

Mrs. Birt has recorded in her reports many instances in which the needs of the work in Liverpool have been met in answer to prayer.

During the year 1886 applications for help from needy children were more numerous than usual; two parties were hied off to Canada in February and in May. The news received that each party was distributed within a week after arrival at the Canadian Home was so encouraging that the Committee allowed the number left behind to be augmented, though in a difficulty about where the money was to come from for a third band.

An appeal was sent out to subscribers, and one reply came in. While acknowledging this donation for ten shillings, Mrs. Birt bowed her head and prayed: "Lord, if there is no other response than this, we shall not be able to send the children!" At that moment a registered letter which the postman had just delivered was handed to her. Inside was a gift of £250 for the emigration work, "from a friend of the little ones" who desired to remain anonymous. The Lord seemed saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

The donor never knew how often the recollection of his gift has been an encouragement to faith when in times of straitness or difficulty about the work.

A TOUCHING BEQUEST

A little girl when dying called for her doll and its clothes to be brought to her bedside, also her money-box and her favourite books, and said :

“My doll is to be taken to Mrs. Birt for her to lend the little girls, so that several may nurse it and be pleased ; my money is all to be given to Mrs. Birt to pay for food for the poor little things she has taken into the Home ; and my books will tell the little girls about my dear Jesus, with whom I am going to live.”

IN MEMORIAM GIFTS

The Rev. John Watson, D.D., was requested by the parents of a little lad who died to give his small savings to some charity in memory of their dear child. Dr. Watson sent the money to the Sheltering Home, and thus the little lad who left a happy earthly home for the “Heavenly Mansions” was the means of providing a poor fatherless and homeless boy with a kindly, comfortable home in Canada.

There is a subscription which has come for

twenty-two years, "In Memoriam, Mary, Nellie and Florence," three little girls early removed from earth, but whose memory has kept their parents' hearts tender towards

"These others, children small,
Spilt like blots about our city."

BETTER THAN MARBLE

A lady friend wrote :

"Whenever the time comes for sending off the boys, let me know and I will send the cheque for two (£30). I consider this a better memorial to my poor boy than marble—*living stones!* I am getting quite a little colony, and I do pray that the chance of doing well will be gratefully worked out."

THE WIDOW'S MITE

For years an aged lady used to call and leave a shilling in Mrs. Birt's hand "for the children," but would never give her name. At last one day it was discovered that the old lady was stone deaf! She had never heard a word of thanks. With the aid of pencil and paper Mrs.

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Birt elicited that she was a widow, over eighty years of age, dependent on her sons, and it was only occasionally she had a shilling given her for her own use when her son came home from sea, and this she always saved for the orphans.

As if with a premonition that it was to be her last visit to the Home on earth, she brought two shillings, double the usual amount, on this occasion. Soon after she passed away.

To know that some of the gifts meant so much self-denial was always to make Mrs. Birt doubly careful in laying out the money economically.

H.R.H. the Duchess of Argyll (Princess Louise) took a great interest in the work while in Canada and sent the following unsolicited letter :

“ KENSINGTON PALACE,

“ *December 4, 1883.*

“ *To MRS. BIRT.*

“ DEAR MADAM,—The excellent work that is being carried on by your ‘ Sheltering Homes for Destitute Children ’ has been brought under H.R.H. the Princess Louise’s notice by more than one inhabitant of Liverpool ; it is also a source of pleasure to know, as the Princess does, that the children you have taken out to Canada

are doing well in that country. Her Royal Highness bids me send you a donation of £15 from herself towards the support of the Home, and wishes success to its operations."

Many of the children send their little love-gifts from Canada "to help some other poor boy or girl." No pressure is put upon them to do this, as so many of them really help their poor relatives as soon as they have anything to spare.

Two brothers who began to send their mother five shillings a week regularly from their first landing in Canada are now sending her £1 a week. She was such a terrible drunkard that none of her children could live with her. These two boys came and besought Mrs. Birt to take them away and give them a chance.

They send the money to the sister who is in a situation, and she sees it properly laid out for the mother. Their love and care has had such an effect on their mother that she has quite reformed, and is leading a better life.

Last Christmas one of Miss Macpherson's boys sent \$300 (£60) to the Stratford Home as a thank-offering, saying he always gave the tenth of his income to God, and that the Home would always receive a share. The donation came at

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at a time when help was urgently needed, though the giver knew it not.

The largest benefaction ever received by the Liverpool Sheltering Homes was a legacy of £7000 from the late Miss A. J. Sleddon, who divided her estate at her death between the Sheltering Homes and the London Missionary Society.

This lady was the last survivor of her family, her fiancé had died, and there was not a relative left to attend her funeral.

The next largest bequest was £5000 from the late Mr. Samuel Smith, with directions to invest it.

Mr. E. P. Parry, Mr. George Fowler, and Mr. John Rylands of Manchester each bequeathed to the Homes £1000. These amounts were used towards completing the building in Myrtle Street.

The late Sir Alfred L. Jones made a unique gift to commemorate King Edward VII's coronation, in the form of one hundred free passages to Canada.

The latest legacy of which word has been received is from a boy emigrated thirty years ago, who has left the major part of his property,

worth from \$3500 to \$4000, to the Knowlton Home.

“ Being in straits I cry,
Lord, make a way ;
Open a door for me,
Help me, I pray !
Gold, Thou hast plenteous store,
Strength, all I want and more ;
All hearts are in Thy hand,
Nothing can Thee withstand ;
Lord, look, and give command,
Lord, make a way ! ”

CHAPTER XII

CLOSING DAYS

“The one thing which differentiates the noble man from the ignoble is his power of caring passionately and desperately about other people, and of spending himself for their happiness and welfare.”—A. C. BENSON.

CHAPTER XII

CLOSING DAYS

MRS. MERRY'S death in 1892 after a few days' illness was a sad break in the happy circle of workers at the Home of Industry. But a dear friend, Miss Stock, sister of Dr. Eugene Stock of the Church Missionary Society, who had been a helper in the work, acted an angel's part to Annie Macpherson in comforting and devotedly helping her in the work throughout the rest of her life.

In 1902 Annie Macpherson suffered from a very severe illness (double pneumonia), through which Dr. Kidd, her physician and life-long friend, attended her. The remaining years of her life she spent at Hove, Brighton, Sussex. Though very much crippled by rheumatism, she was able to go out in a bath-chair and enjoy visits from friends until the last.

Mrs. Birt was visiting her sister in November 1904, and had intended returning to Liverpool on the Saturday; the weather however was so cold that she decided to remain a few days longer, and so was with her till the end. Annie

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died in the night preceding Advent Sunday without warning or apparent suffering. Her faithful attendant for several years, who slept in her room, scarcely knew when she passed away.

On the 3rd December 1904 Annie Macpherson was laid to rest in the City of London Cemetery, Ilford, Essex, beside her mother, sister and niece. The beautifully simple Memorial Service was held at the Home of Industry, 29 Bethnal Green Road, where as of old "the widows stood round weeping," and many testified how "full of good works and alms deeds" this woman had been.

The work at the Home of Industry, 29 Bethnal Green Road; The Training Home, London Fields, Hackney; and the Canadian Home, Stratford, Ontario, is carried on by Miss Macpherson's nephews, James Macpherson Merry, Dr. Edward Merry, and William H. Merry.

Mrs. Birt since October 1910 has been too feeble to take any part in the Liverpool work, but her daughter carries it on, and Mrs. Birt's gracious smile is still an encouragement. She is just "waiting—waiting to go," as she says, on that last journey where

"I hope to see my Pilot face to face,
When I have crossed the Bar."



THE ANNIE MACPHERSON ORPHAN HOME, STRATFORD, ONTARIO

The three sisters were the complement of one another.

Annie was the one to whom the gift of vision and the pioneer spirit was given, the one who could grasp principles and plan large schemes, who could devise work for others and inspire them with courage to attempt it. She was of medium height, with a good figure and silky light brown hair. Her voice was light and clear, with a thrill in it that at once touched the heart and drew forth sympathy. Wherever she pleaded the cause of the children she enlisted hosts of friends. She knew the potency of facts, and had such a striking way of telling them that her appeals were irresistible. Few could listen to her stories of the rescued without tears, while countless numbers in all ranks of life are indebted to Annie Macpherson for the words that spoke to their souls and stirred them to noble living. She was a woman of an intense mother-nature, who longed passionately to save the oppressed and cruelly used children of the poor, and whose delight it was to live amongst them and spend herself for their benefit.

Her simple cheerfulness and wonderful tact were the secret of her success in securing the

affections of the people among whom she dwelt, and enabled her to present the Gospel in its most pleasing form to them.

As she passed along the streets she would be greeted by all kinds of people, and had a ready word for each. On one occasion some criminal women caught hold of her, and were proceeding to rob her when the light from a gas-lamp fell on her face and, exclaiming, "Oh, it's you," they left her unharmed.

Another time a drunken woman was threatening to assault her; another virago came up and, hurling the other woman aside, said, shaking her fist at Miss Macpherson: "Hurt you! I should think not indeed. You who are so kind to the little children."

A LETTER FROM GEO. E. MORGAN, EDITOR
OF "*THE CHRISTIAN*"

"12 PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS,
"LONDON, E.C.,
"September 9, 1912.

"DEAR MISS BIRT,—A visit to the old Home of Industry in my childhood was always to me a dream of delight, mingled with awe. There was an air of mystery and romance about it that

I felt though I did not understand. But the dearest treat of all was to be spoken to by the sweet-graced lady at the head of it, and 'Miss Macpherson' was a name that embodied the highest of my childish ideals.

"I can see myself again watching in wonderment the dexterous fingers of 'the little match-box-makers,' for whom by voice and pen and kindly deeds she did so much; or standing, not without some fear and trembling, among the excitements of the 'Bird Fair.' One of my most treasured possessions for many years was a stuffed bird in a case, which she bestowed upon me, but which, alas, succumbed to the corruption of moth and rust!

"I look back to those days, well over forty years ago, as laying the very foundation of Christian philanthropy in my heart; and every time we met in later life, the same inspiration from her presence made me glad that I had ever been honoured with her acquaintance. May her biography bestir many to follow in her steps.—Very truly yours,

(Signed) "GEORGE E. MORGAN."

MEMORIES AND IMPRESSIONS OF ANNIE
MACPHERSON

BY THE HON. MRS. GORDON

(Author of "Clear Round"; "Messiah"; and "World-healers")

MISS BIRT has asked me, as one of her aunt's oldest friends, to send her some impressions of the years which I spent in intimate friendship with Annie Macpherson. It was through reading *The Little Matchbox-Makers* that the foundation of our friendship was laid, and I shall ever feel grateful that on the threshold of life I was privileged to come into personal contact with such true missionary souls as Annie Macpherson and her sisters and their many fellow-labourers in philanthropic work throughout the United Kingdom, for it furnished me with a testing-stone and a standard by which to gauge all other efforts for which public sympathy and aid are sought, viz. faithfulness and thoroughness in those who are entrusted with stewardship. As I look back upon that band of workers in those early days, I see the wan, white faces of young men who, though confined in city offices and warehouses all week, gave their Saturday half-holiday and Sunday rest, and even some

of their week evenings, to teach poor boys and girls in night-schools, to preach in Bird Fair amongst the Sunday "fanciers" of dogs and birds, or to visit in the thieves' lodging-houses. I recall not a few amongst the young women also who so cheerfully toiled in the foetid atmosphere of the East End of those days. The work had to be done. *They* were the folk at hand to do it; and whether the time were night or day, whether it were their respective work or not, they did not pause to think, but put their shoulder to the wheel and did it.

This whole-hearted spirit which pervaded the Mission was certainly due to the inspiration of the Chief.

It was my privilege to be entrusted with much of the correspondence. In this way I got a remarkable insight into the workings of this Mission, and am able to speak with authority as to the way in which the money came and the gifts in kind, such as sacks of oatmeal from a miller, a web of cloth from a manufacturer, or a chest of tea from a city merchant. I can also speak as to the expenditure, and can truly say that never a farthing seemed wasted, certainly not one on empty show. I remember the rever-

ence with which the self-denial half-crowns and sixpences were handled ; and I also recall the bitter scorn with which Annie once turned upon a well-meaning wealthy lady who, after being shown all round the "Beehive" and its many industries, exclaimed as she was about to step into her brougham, "Then I suppose, Miss Macpherson, you will be glad of the contents of our RAG-BAG!"

For the Queen-bee had her sting and used it, not always wisely, and sometimes too well, if the truth must be told. She was absolutely regardless of man's praise or blame, and the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" was sometimes more prominent than palatable in her speech. The hidden tragedy of Annie Macpherson's life was known to few. One to whom she had been betrothed in early life died under peculiarly tragic circumstances on the verge of marriage. That this bereavement, which deprived her of the joys of wifehood, affected her deeply, there is no doubt, nor that her wonderfully tender love to every little child was the overflow of the rich spring of pent-up mother-love which had been so ruthlessly checked at its source.

Always content with the plainest of stuff gowns and bonnets, it was almost useless to give her a warm shawl, as she was sure to take it off at the first chance and wrap it round some widow's shoulders whom she deemed in greater need of comfort.

It has been said that "almost all pioneers in work wear soul-blinkers," and to this Annie Macpherson was no exception.

I am sure that her own spiritual life suffered deeply from its contraction and narrowed horizons. The exigencies of her incomparable work left her no time for taking restful holidays, and also excluded her from the fields of literature, which would have fed her big mental powers and solved many of the problems so sorely perplexing to her righteous soul; which she failed to see were merely the "mint, anise, and cummin" with which the uninstructed occupied themselves.

My last memory goes back to December 1904, when, on a dark winter's day, we gathered on the ground-floor of the present Home of Industry for her funeral service, and saw the simplest of local hearses take the beloved remains of the Chief away to the cemetery at Ilford where so many of her friends repose. Just before the

bearers carried the coffin through our midst, a man's voice broke the deep silence by ejaculating "A shock of corn fully ripe!" and I think this simple epitaph expressed the thought in every mourner's heart—"A shock of corn fully ripe!" and borne to the great Harvest-home in "the Land of Wide Horizons!"¹

". . . He alone is great
Who, by a life heroic, conquers fate!"

E. A. GORDON.

TOKIO, JAPAN, *January* 1913.

Rachel (Mrs. Merry) had the home-making gift and the power of patient daily plod and attention to details which gave a solid support to the ideas of her sister. Her warm, loving, motherly ways added an attraction to the Home, when she and Mr. Merry joined Annie Macpherson in the work, and supplied the touch of home life without which Annie's affectionate nature could not be satisfied.

Louisa's (Mrs. Birt) entire freedom from thought of self made her able to set everyone at ease; her friendly manner interested people

¹ Isaiah xxxiii. 17.



Elizabeth



Muriel



Henry, B.D.



Walter

SOME OF THE CHILDREN IN CANADA

at once in her work. Though no one had heavier trials and sorrow to face than she had in her course through life, yet she kept a cheerful outlook through all. Her children and friends can record that never did they hear a grumble from her lips either at the weather, or the food at table, or of weariness in the work.

She had a magic way of gaining the children's obedience. As a boy said when questioned by the Canadian farmer, "Now tell us, what sort of a woman is Mrs. Birt?" he replied, "Well, she's a very nice lady, but she's the kind of woman that when she says 'beans' you daren't say 'peas.'"

She had a very practical eye for all the details of the management of two large establishments in Liverpool and in Canada. She loved to see everything as pretty and well arranged as possible; no uniform for her protégés; every child must have its individual appearance studied. About all her work there was the personal touch; she was never too busy to give individual attention to any sick or sorrowful or naughty child.

Her bright smile and sweet voice inspired poor widows and famishing children in thousands

with courage to trust themselves to her care and guidance in leaving their native shores for an unknown land.

Her "talks" to the children, like Annie Macpherson's, were racy and full of illustrations upon which to hang practical advice; while at the public meetings of the Sheltering Homes her natural eloquence caused it to be said, "The Town Hall was always damp after Mrs. Birt's meeting."

Neither sister was ever of very robust health, yet they each made about one hundred and twenty voyages to and fro across the Atlantic, covering a distance of 360,000 miles with their precious cargoes of living freight. Every hour and every day of their lives were filled with correspondence, interviews, and the superintendence of large institutions and of varied affairs. They faced obloquy and much unjust criticism in the early days of their work, but their singleness of aim and their strong faith in God as their Friend and Guide upheld them through all difficulties.

As Ruskin says:

"We treat God with irreverence by banishing Him from our thoughts, not by referring to His

will on slight occasions. His is not the finite authority or intelligence which cannot be troubled with small things. There is nothing so small but that we may honour God by asking His guidance of it, or insult Him by taking it into our own hands; and what is true of the Deity is equally true of His Revelation. We use it most reverently when most habitually; our insolence is in ever acting without reference to it, our true honouring of it is in its universal application."

It was this intimate reliance on God's strength and wisdom which enabled these weak women to raise thirteen thousand young lives through their individual influence from helpless misery or neglect to independence, to prosperous careers, and in the majority of cases to a faith in a loving God and Father which they learnt from the living example set before them.

It is established beyond a doubt that over 98 per cent. of the young emigrants turn out well.

The table on next page, compiled from the records of one Distributing Home in Canada (the Knowlton Home, Province of Quebec), proves this in detail.

RECORD IN THE BOOKS OF THE KNOWLTON DISTRIBUTING HOME, 1872-1912

No. of History Book.	Total Number placed from "K."	Complete Adoptions under 9 Years.	Ages from 9 to 12 Years placed for Board, Clothing, and Schooling until 14 or 16.	Ages from 12 to 18 Years placed on Wages and part Schooling.	Ages from 18 Years and over.	Recorded Marriages.	Recorded Deaths.	Returned to England on Account of Character.	Sentenced to Imprisonment during the past 40 Years.
I.	388	143	129	99	17	36	14	4	Seven. None of these were for more serious offences than theft.
II.	275	74	67	114	20	63	13	3	
III.	170	31	42	90	7	38	8	3	
IV.	271	82	74	95	20	67	15	7	
V.	240	46	79	99	16	55	7	6	
VI.	401	85	98	202	16	98	24	5	
VII.	310	66	86	149	9	82	8	3	
VIII.	201	48	87	39	27	69	6	2	
IX.	317	69	84	134	30	42	7	5	
X.	316	81	85	109	41	45	12	3	
XI.	297	86	102	88	21	31	7	5	
XII.	304	77	80	117	30	29	8	6	
XIII.	308	41	71	170	26	18	3	5	
XIV.	307	22	88	188	9	5	6	11	
XV.	309	23	92	183	11	...	4	1	
XVI.	297	17	58	210	12	
XVII.	147	13	36	92	6	
	4858	1004	1358	2178	318	678	142	69	

Fifteen at least of Mrs. Birt's Liverpool boys have become clergymen in various denominations; several have become doctors; one has gone as a medical missionary to China; some have become lawyers, journalists, manufacturers, store-keepers; while many own their own farms. The girls have done equally well; many have become teachers, nurses, stenographers or skilled milliners, and married into good positions. The average age of marriage is twenty-one for the girls and twenty-two for the boys.

Many have married into the families of the Canadians who adopted them when young; many have nursed their foster-parents with all patience and loving-kindness in their last days; and some, when misfortune has overtaken those Canadians with whom they spent their youthful days, have willingly come to their help and assistance. Miss Macpherson's Homes can show equally gratifying results.

The work has always been arduous and onerous, and demanded all that a woman's heart could give of sympathy and nightly and daily toil; but its reward has been, even in this life, intense happiness and delight in seeing the wonderful change from poverty to plenty, and from gloom

to sunshine, and in receiving the gratitude of so many young hearts.

But the three sisters had a vision of the future, when before the throne of Heaven they will be able to say in all humility: "Lo! here am I, and the children whom God hath given me."

CHAPTER XIII

IS THE WORK STILL NECESSARY ?

“In a Country like ours, where each child that is born among us finds every acre of land appropriated, a universal ‘not yours’ set upon the rich things with which he is surrounded, and a government which, unlike those of old Greece or modern China, does not permit superfluous babies to be strangled,—such a child, I say, since he is required to live, has a right to demand such teaching as shall enable him to live with honesty and take such a place in society as belongs to the faculties which he has brought with him. It is a right which was recognised in one shape or another by our ancestors. It must be recognised now and always if we are not to become a mutinous rabble, and it ought to be the guiding principle of all education, high and low. We have not to look any longer to this island only. There is an abiding place now for Englishmen and Scots wherever our flag is flying. This narrow Britain, once our only home, has become the breeding-place and nursery of a race which is spreading over the world. Year after year we are swarming as the bees swarm; and year after year I hope more and more high-minded young men will prefer free air and elbow-room for mind and body, to the stool and desk, or the hopeless labour of our home farmsteads and workshops. The boy that is kindly nurtured and wisely taught and assisted to make his way in life does not forget his father and mother. If the million lads that swarm in our towns and villages are so trained that at home or in the Colonies they can provide for themselves without first passing through a painful interval of suffering, they will be loyal wherever they may be.”—T. CARLYLE, *Past and Present*.

CHAPTER XIII

IS THE WORK STILL NECESSARY?

THERE are many more agencies at work in Great Britain to-day, picking up the debris from our social fabric, than there were forty years ago, when Annie Macpherson began to cross the seas with her youthful emigrants, and when Mrs. Birt opened the Sheltering Home in Liverpool; but whether there is really any diminution in the amount of waste thrown off in our present stage of civilisation is open to question.

While there is less drunkenness among men, there appears to be more among certain classes of women. The Rt. Hon. John Burns said, in July 1912, at Haslingden, Lancs: "In the last seventy-eight years the Poor Law had cost the country £600,000,000, but that was only four years' drink bill, and if they could get rid of the one they would not need the other."

No check has yet been imposed on the multi-

plication of the insane, the feeble-minded, or epileptics.

The housing problem is still acute in the large cities, and equally in country villages, leading to the depopulation of our countryside. This, as Miss Macpherson pointed out forty-five years ago, is one of the main causes of the misery and degradation of our slum population. It directly leads to drunkenness and vice.

There is constantly present a large amount of unemployment. There are about half a million workmen belonging to the principal trades registered as "unemployed" throughout the year, but these are the aristocracy of labour. For a large number of our slum population we have had to invent the word "unemployable"; untrained to any skilled labour, unused to steady work of any kind, these are the drag upon the more industrious members of the community—their children are those who fall to charitable societies to take care of from the cradle to the grave.

340,000 children annually leave the elementary schools¹ between the ages of thirteen and fourteen. A large proportion of them drift into "blind alley" occupations and eventually re-

¹ 10,000 leave school annually in Liverpool alone.

cruit the "unemployable" class. The authorities are just beginning, in a tentative way, to touch the fringe of this problem.

The Industrial Schools under Home Office direction house 16,000 children, mostly those whose parents are unable or unfit to control them. The Ven. Archdeacon Madden said recently: "Very few persons have any idea of the terrible conditions which prevail in certain parts of Liverpool life except those whose public duties require them closely to examine the facts. In the Education Committee they have the most distressing reports about mothers who are unworthy of the name, and of fathers who cruelly and callously neglect and desert their families."

The Guardians under Local Government Board direction have 71,000 children living in institutions entirely under their control, and 182,000 more on out-relief; many of the latter are very sadly neglected and not getting a fair chance in life. These numbers are those receiving relief on one day, 1st January, only—above half a million (500,000) children receive Poor Law relief at some time or other throughout the year.

The Salvation Army recently made an inquiry

which led them to state that 30,000 children in Britain were living in grave moral danger.

The Recorder of Liverpool lately (June 1912) called attention to the large increase in juvenile crime which has taken place recently. He remarked, "It is not too much to say that the centre of crime in Liverpool has shifted for the time being from the adult to the Children's Court. It is a very sad and painful condition of affairs, and one to which Liverpool people should undoubtedly give much consideration. I sincerely hope it will not last long."

In the Children's Court in Liverpool in one week (in June 1912) there were thirty-five cases for investigation, the previous week the number was forty-one. The offences have also increased in gravity.

One living example is worth pages of statistics. A recent case brought to the notice of the Sheltering Homes was that of a family of seven children. The mother died of consumption in December 1911. Before her death she begged the clergyman who visited her to get her children into Mrs. Birt's Home to save them from their father, from whom she had suffered great brutality and unkindness; she did not wish her

children to go through the same experience. The father has hardly done a week's regular work for the last twelve months. He is a drinking unworthy fellow.

It was found on examination that the three youngest children were tuberculous in one form or another. It took six months' persevering effort to get these three cared for in any way. Two were at last admitted to the Parish Infirmary; one was undertaken by the Invalid Children's Association. Three others were admitted to the Sheltering Home. One of these has been under surgical treatment since the beginning of the year and is not yet fit for emigration. Two girls were taken to Canada in April. The girl of fourteen had been acting as mother to the family and had bravely done her best. This girl for some time after admission could not be induced to eat anything but bread and butter and tea. She did not like meat, vegetables, or pudding; she said, "We never had them." She has found an excellent home on a beautiful farm, with her little sister placed near by in another farmhouse. They go to the same church and Sunday-school, and express themselves as very happy.

It will be noticed that the seventh child has not been accounted for. The eldest boy, aged sixteen, was found a situation at nine shillings a week, but threw it up because the foreman reproved him one day. The sister writes from Canada that her mistress's son would take this brother; but he will not even call at the Home. He and his father are in a low lodging-house, and it is reported: "He is too bad for you; he is beyond you now."

This example shows how important it is to save the boys and girls while young, before bad example and a loafing life ruins them. And it incidentally shows how necessary it is to attend to tuberculous cases before they infect others in the family.

Is the work still necessary? The population increases by one million every three years. The Rt. Hon. John Burns, President of the Local Government Board, says: "We can afford to emigrate 300,000 a year of our population for the next ten years, then we may have to stop."

The fifteenth Earl of Derby said: "We are and we must be an emigrating country. We shall always have men enough left at home; and even if emigration were to go the length of checking the increase here, which it almost certainly

will not, surely it is better to have 35,000,000 of human beings leading useful and intelligent lives, rather than 45,000,000 struggling painfully for a bare subsistence. There are persons, I know, who would object on the ground that, though emigration may be good for the individual, it weakens the State. I cannot take that view. A contented people goes a long way to make a State powerful, and I have always been convinced that a great deal of our freedom from internal trouble in this country, which we sometimes ascribe to national character and sometimes to our political constitution, is really due to the various outlets which, both in past and in present times, we have created to ourselves beyond seas. They are our safety-valves, and if they get choked I should expect the results to be uncomfortable."

Mr. Harold Cox, giving evidence before the Dominions' Royal Commission to inquire into the trade and resources of the Empire (19th November 1912), said that it was universally admitted that most of the large towns were overcrowded. In London alone the excess of births over deaths was in round figures 1000 every week. Nor was there any reason to hope that the condition could be dealt with by in-

ternal migration, or by garden cities, or any agricultural developments.

It was especially desirable to encourage the emigration of women and children. He thought State aid should be given to assist people to emigrate.

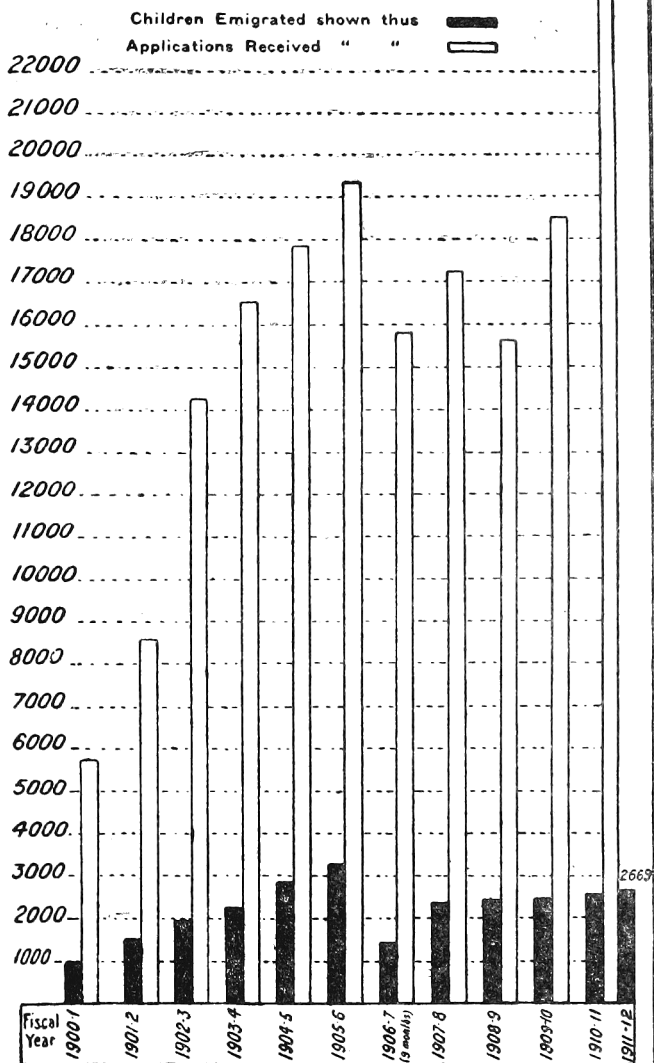
Further, there is ample opportunity for these children to do well in Canada. The applications for children received in 1912 by the principal societies numbered 31,040, while the children they took out were only 2669.

There does not appear to be a need for new organisations, but for a more liberal use and support of those already established. The present agencies have long experience and knowledge of the Canadian farmers to guide them, and can place children more judiciously than new agencies. They all say they could place advantageously a larger number of trained children over twelve years of age.

From a patriotic point of view it is worth an effort to secure that the "last, best West" should be populated by people of British stock and descent instead of by foreigners. Why should not Britain's poor have the benefit of those healthful and fertile lands?

JUVENILE IMMIGRANTS & APPLICATIONS

31,040. RECEIVED FROM 1900 TO 1912.



Forty-three years ago one of Miss Macpherson's councillors had the statesman's insight to see the importance of this emigration movement to the nation.

General H. M. Blair wrote :

"Believing as I do that we are founding not a colony only, but a great nation in Canada, I cannot but look upon this movement of youthful emigration as a most important one, destined to be the humble means, among others, of strengthening the bond of union between the two countries—a tie which it is our duty as well as our policy to do all in our power to perpetuate. Recent events have shown too clearly how subject to secret intrigue and uncertainty are all Continental alliances, and it seems surprising that statesmen of the present day should not be more impressed than they appear to be with the importance of colonisation and the free confederation of our English race in our magnificent colonial Dominion, a close union with which may prove, at some future day, our greatest security."

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