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March 2022

### Lecture Four: Charity, a Degrading Influence of the 18th Century

Earl Clement Davis

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#### Recommended Citation

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1

Charity a degrading influence  
of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century.

I cannot quite picture to you the condition in which England found herself in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It is not at all surprising to find an intense reaction from the extremes of the Puritan movement under such sway as we enter the movements of life in the opening of the eighteenth Century to which we very soon are attracted.

You will remember how we trace the development of the Puritan movement from its first faint beginnings through the long centuries to its final dramatic struggle with the King and his followers; and how under the masterful power of Cromwell, and his magnificent army who rested upon the teachings of the Bible for their authority and guidance, the

issue between over what constituted<sup>the</sup>  
the right to govern was fought out  
upon the battle fields of Naseby and  
Marston Town. It was a period of  
tremendous political and religious  
excitement, in which we accumulated  
all the defects, as well as the worst  
brutal feelings of man's nature.

But the reaction comes. The Puritan  
yoke, so tremendous and sweeping  
in its rage, and not entirely with-  
out its periods of delirium, had passed  
the crisis, and the way to health was  
now opened up.

In the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
we find England in a peculiar  
situation. It is easy enough in dealing  
with this period to make a picture  
as black as one ever painted. It is  
a period extreme reaction against the  
excitements of a struggle in which  
we involved the dearest wool

and religious interests. Just as the 3  
individual, who has been through  
a long period of intense work and  
activity, likes to take a vacation,  
to forget what he has been working  
over, and give himself up to less  
exacting, and less strenuous period  
in preparation of new duties, so  
the nation as a whole does this same  
thing. As we come upon England in  
the opening years of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century  
for the purpose of noting some of the  
social, moral, and religious conditions  
of the time, we find her in a period  
of vacation conditions. While it may  
be discouraging to investigate at this  
point, it is necessary to do so, but  
we must judge the conditions in  
light of this fact, that it is a period  
of relaxation, and indifference, an  
attempt to throw off the duties and  
cares of serious living, and give

(4)

in a general pleasure seeking, macabre.

We are trying to look at things from the point of the prosperous classes, and especially in their relation to the people as a whole. To one who has read Thackeray's *Henry* towards the general atmosphere of the period is fairly familiar. Its general character is coarse and vulgar. One has only to read the literary products of the period to see this very clearly. Swollets, Fieldings, Swift's writings, if one has the patience to read them, mirror the conditions under which they were written.

As to the kind of pleasures that these people of the upper classes were interested in, such customs as bull-baiting and bear-baiting were common among the greatest lords and ladies. To witness such a spectacle

15  
was one of the common methods of  
killing time among the better sort of  
folks. In Queen Anne's time it was  
performed twice a week at Hockley  
Hole in London. "Among the entertain-  
ments advertised in London in 1729 and  
1730," says Lecky, "we find a woad ball  
to be chased of ~~in~~ with fireworks and  
turned loose in the game place, a  
dog to be chased of with fireworks  
over him, a bear to be let loose  
at the same time, and a cat to be  
tied to a bull's tail, a woad ball  
chased of with fireworks to be  
baited (i.e. tortured)." (Lecky, England in  
the 18<sup>th</sup> Cen. vol I. P. 598). Cocks-fighting  
was also common, in schools, and  
among all classes of people. In 1705 its  
merits, and advantages were set forth  
in "An Essay on the Innocent and  
Royal Recreation and Art of Cocking."  
The essayist hoped that this great

form of sport might become a popular  
local, and to very common, it being  
no innocent a past time. Some  
times, it is said, the church bells were  
rung in honor of a victory in the  
inter county cock fights. Of course  
hunting in various forms seemed as  
the country gentlemen's great method  
of satisfying his passion for excitement,  
Gambling was very common, both  
among men and women. It is  
not quite clear whether the mania  
for gambling is the cause, the result  
or simply an attendant circumstance  
to the wildest kind of speculation  
into which men and women would  
head long, in their mad desire  
for money. The south sea Bubble  
was only one of many that lead  
the get rich quick people to the  
great ruin when the Bubbles exploded,  
Intemperance were regarded as a legitimate

method of performing charitable duties.<sup>7.</sup>  
The feudal mitres of this is Hollis  
Hall at Harvard which was built  
from the proceeds of a lottery.

Not only was the coarseness and  
vulgarity of the times exhibited here,  
but also in the construction of the stage.  
Not <sup>in</sup> high art, not <sup>in</sup> literary interest  
but simply the form of the stage to  
produce vulgar obscene entertain-  
ments was its influenced fact.

But perhaps the greatest reproach  
is that all this stage vulgarity was  
permitted for obscenity's sake. It was  
not lightened ~~and~~ even by the  
slightest sense of delicacy and  
refined feelings.

But this brings us to a point where  
we can come in contact with  
what was really the heart and core  
of the trouble. There was no place

for art, except of that sort which  
seemed to satisfy the desire for  
ostentation and display. Portrait painting  
flourished, and lived upon the vanity  
of strollers. Art in other forms went  
begging. The struggle of Handel the  
great composer of music is well known,  
etc became one of the signs of good  
taste among fashionable people to  
ridicule his music" says Lecky.

While the list of writers which  
appear during this period, is considerable  
and their work is important, the interesting  
thing is that their interests somewhat  
reflect the commonplace nature of the  
life about them. There is little or no  
place of what we call the finer  
sentiments, and deeper thoughts. To  
deal with superficial things in  
a superficial way, and if lead  
by chance to touch upon some topic

of a finer quality, it was with  
the hand of play's indifference  
and irony. The truth seems to be  
that the finer sentiments of life  
had been crushed.

Perhaps this is illustrated by the  
attitude of the people towards religion.  
To revert to the subject of morality  
and religion, the subject which had  
been the sole topic of vital interest  
during the Puritan movement, seemed  
utterly impossible, says to this  
Englishman on his of the early 18<sup>th</sup>  
century. "In higher circles, every-  
one laughs, if one talks of religion"  
said Winterset on his visit to  
England. The clergy had lost their  
standing, and were about on a par  
socially with the sewing maid.  
They read prayers which no one  
attended.

They hung around the heels of their lords, and as one has said there only duty seemed to be to be able to carry their lord to bed after he had become so drunk that he could no longer stand or walk. Recall the Parson of Henry Esmond. Even the worst glib-  
gette of church writers have to pass over this period with their eyes closed or else declare that the curate was a disgrace to the church. While the Bishops and other higher dignities regarded their positions only as an easy means of getting money. The Bishop is said never to have visited his diocese. The fact is they were on about the same plane as their drunken lords, please seeking lords, with this exception that in general they were not

quite so bold, and above board" in acknowledging their sins, in the midst of the course and vulgarity, which they should have detested, they become helpless objects who pained and whined in the midst of it all. Among the more prominent people Christianity had become merely a theme for scorn, and was regarded as a mere fiction and superstition.

Of course the clergy lost their political influence, and the restraint which at times had been given to political life by the influence of the church, was now with drawn. ~~and~~ in fact <sup>the world of</sup> politics shared the same fate as all the rest of society. It was corrupt, venal, Bribery and graft were ~~so~~ common. In fact the only method of accomplishing results either for

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the benefit or the injury of the  
nation was by the force of in-  
fluence. Wolfoliz influence at this  
point is illustrative.

That is a dark and gloomy picture  
you say, well, so be it, but we  
must go far over the great middle  
class, and take of one or two points  
which show the relation of this brutal  
period upon the poor. I called this  
lecture "Charity, a degrading influence  
in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century." You are wondering  
how there could be any ~~the~~ such  
thing as charity in such an age.  
As a matter of fact there was not any  
such thing, charity had become  
Rhus giving. The lavish, and  
ostentatious display, the recklessness  
~~of~~ expenditure of money had pro-  
duced its effect. An illustration  
is seen in the woman of forging

servants. The custom which one <sup>L<sup>K</sup>3</sup>  
coll tying had become so common  
that houses no longer paid their  
servants wages, but simply gave  
them board and a place to stop.

while the servant defended upon  
top ~~and~~ from the guests, and when  
a dinner party filed from the  
dining room, it was compelled  
to run the gauntlet of the out-  
stretched hands of the butlers.  
Lovable and chaste satisfaction with  
four-fold servants was such in  
those days, as to afford many a  
woman with a topic of conversation  
for all eternity.

In 1704 the evils which this pernicious  
extravagance leads to come to the front  
in an attempt to extend the system  
of poor-law relief. Defoe, who  
writes with keenness, and wisdom,  
issued a tract, "Giving Alms

to charity." He maintains that the (14)  
pauperism of the country is not due  
to any want of employment, but  
to habits of idleness, drunken-  
ness, and extravagance. "I affirm,"  
he says, "of my own ~~experience~~  
knowledge, that when I wanted a  
man for laboring work, and  
offered him 9S per week, to strolling  
fellow at my door, they have  
frequently told me to my face  
that they could get more as begging."

"There is nothing more frequent than for  
an Englishman to work till he has  
got his pockets full of money, and then  
go and be idle, or perhaps drunk, till  
it is all gone, and perhaps himself in  
debt: and ask him in his cups, what  
he intends, he'll tell you honestly  
that he'll drink as long as it  
lasts, and then go to work for more

I make no difficulty to promise, <sup>(15)</sup>  
on a short summons, to produce  
above a thousand families in England,  
within my particular knowledge,  
who go in rags, and their children  
wanting bread, whose fathers can  
earn their 15s to 25s. per week, but  
will not work.... The reason  
why so many pretend to want  
work is that, as they can live so  
well on the pretence of wanting  
work, they would be wad to  
have it and work in earnest."

So you see the meanness, the  
extravagance of the volubility is  
perfectly mirrored in the lines  
of the Puffers, "who ~~off~~ copies  
who" you cannot say. But the  
cursed abuse giving, which  
often passes for charity, had

sewed to transform whole  
 armies of people into professional  
 beggars. Charity had become a  
 profession, as devoid of sentiment  
 and healthiness, and human  
 interest, as were the lives from  
 which it emanated.

This is a gloomy and discouraging  
 situation that we find England in  
 after the passage of Puritanism had  
 run its course. But it is really not  
 so discouraging as it seems. As  
 we have seen before the Puritan  
 movement was not positive  
 in its work, but negative. It  
 had but one great object in view,  
 namely, of establishing the  
 truth that the so-called authority  
 which the Catholic Church

and English church exercised <sup>17</sup>  
basing its claims upon a former  
which did not exist, was a fiction.  
That was accomplished. The natural  
reaction was such as we have seen.  
The real positive, active, aggressive  
work of building a new structure  
but the site of the old had  
as yet hardly begun. The word  
power and vigor of Calvinistic  
Puritanism was still working its  
way to the surface among  
the middle classes. Its work was  
yet of a hidden, and even crude  
nature, but the former and vitally  
still existed in this vacation  
period of English History.

Already in the thick under-  
brush of the early years of

the 18<sup>th</sup> Century evidences of the <sup>18</sup>  
new power, were coming to the surface.  
De Foë was writing. Addison was  
dealing out morsels of literary merit  
in the Spectator. These found their  
way to many a breakfast table.  
Steele was helping. There was a  
revival of Shakespeare's ~~flaccid~~ plays,  
which which came as a breath of  
fresh air blowing across the foul  
atmosphere of the stage. Even the  
appearance of Handel was of vast  
moment. The coffee houses, where  
men of taste and interest came for  
conversation, were becoming popular,  
a tremendous improvement ~~above~~  
the ale houses, and gin shops.

Meantime, also, manufacturing  
was increasing, and upon the basis  
of Commercial and industrial

prosperity this great extravagance<sup>19</sup>  
and luxuriousness rested. That  
some DeFoe who spoke with such  
acumen on the problem of begging,  
also describes in his *Tour through  
Great Britain*, (wrote in 1724-6) the condition  
of industry. Speaking of the swell  
manufacturers near Halifax in York-  
shire he says: "The land was divided  
into small enclosures, from two acres  
to six or seven each, seldom more. Every  
three or four <sup>pieces</sup> ~~acres~~ of land having a  
house belonging to them; hardly  
~~to~~ a house standing out of speaking  
distance from another. We could see  
at every house a tent, and on al-  
most every tent a piece of cloth  
or kersey, or shalloon. At every  
considerable house there was a  
a manufactory. Every clothier

keeps one horse at least to carry  
 his manufactures to the market;  
 and every one generally keeps a  
 cow or two more for his family.  
 By this means the small pieces of  
 enclosed land about each house  
 are occupied, for they scarce sow  
 corn enough to feed their poultry.  
 The houses are full of lusty fellows,  
 some at the dye vat, some at the  
 two loom, others dressing the  
 clothes; the women and children  
 carding and spinning; being  
 all employed from the youngest  
 to the oldest, "..... and not a beggar  
 to be seen or an idle person."  
 Law III P. 146.

This gives us a much more  
 cheerful conception of England,  
 for it is true that among these

21

obscure people, things of real value  
were happening. Rev. Eliot's Admiral  
Bede is interesting as showing the  
emergence from the ~~the~~ people who  
were doing the real work, a new  
set of thoughts and ideas. Upon soil  
such as this, soil which still  
remained essentially ready for  
cultivation, after the ~~first~~ purifica-  
tion at the hands of the Puritan fever,  
upon this soil fell the words of  
Whitefield, and the Wesleys.  
Already they were growing into  
manhood, and were tracing in  
their minds the workings of  
thought and ideas which had  
been almost obliterated from  
England for three generations.  
For the time being we leave

This as it is. Next Sunday evening 22  
we shall consider the great Methodist  
movement, and note how the Wesleys  
lay the foundation of modern religious  
conceptions.

[Lecture 4]  
Charity, a Degrading Influence of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century,  
[18<sup>th</sup> Century]

Earl Clement Davis

Pittsfield, MA

No Date

I cannot quite picture to you the condition in which England found herself in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is not at all surprising to find an intense reaction from the extremes of the Puritan movement under full sway as we enter the movements of life in the opening of the eighteenth century to which we now turn our attention.

You will remember how we traced the development of the Puritan movement from its first faint beginnings through the long centuries to its final dramatic struggle with the King and his followers; how under the materful power of Cromwell, and his magnificent army who rested upon the teaching of the Bible for their authority and guidance, the issue over what constituted the right to govern was fought out upon the battlefields of Naseby and Marston Moor.<sup>1</sup> It was a period of tremendous political and religious excitement in which we accommodated all the deepest as well as the most brutal feelings of man's nature. But the reaction came. The Puritan fever, so tremendous and {???) in its rage, and not entirely without its periods of delierium, had passed the crisis, and the way to health was now opened up.

In the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century we find England in a peculiar situation. It is easy enough in dealing with this period to make a picture as black as one ever painted. It is a period [of] extreme reaction against the excitements of a struggle in which we involved the deepest moral and religious interests. Just as the individual, who has been through a long period of intense work and activity, likes to take a vacation, to forget what he has

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<sup>1</sup> The battles of Naseby, June 14, 1645, and Marston Moor, July 2, 1644 were two of the important Royalist defeats in the English Civil War.

been working over, and give himself up to a less exacting, and less strenuous period in preparation of new duties, so the nation as a whole does the same thing. As we come upon England in the opening years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century for the purpose of noting some of the social, moral and religious conditions of the time, we find her in a kind of vacation condition. While it may be discouraging to investigate at this point, it is necessary to do so, but we must judge the conditions in light of this fact, that it is a period of relaxation, and indifference, an attempt to throw off the duties and cares of serious living, and join in a general pleasure-seeking vacation.

We are trying to look at things from the point of the prosperous classes, and especially in their relation to the people as a whole. To one who has read Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*,<sup>2</sup> the general atmosphere of the period is fairly familiar. Its general character is coarse and vulgar. One has only to read the literary products of the period to see this very clearly. Smollet's Fielding's, Swift's<sup>3</sup> writings, if one has the patience to read them, mirror the conditions under which they were written.

As to the kind of pleasures that these people of the upper classes were interested in, such customs as bull-baiting and bear-baiting were common among the greatest lords and ladies. To witness such a spectacle was one of the common methods of killing time among the better sort of folks, "In Queen Anne's time it was performed twice a week at Hockley Hole in London. ... Among the entertainments advertised in London in 1729 and 1730," says Lecky,  
we find a mad bull to be dressed up with fireworks and turned loose in the game place, a dog to be dressed up with fireworks over him, a bear to be let loose at the same time, and a cat to be tied to a bull's tail, a mad bull dressed

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<sup>2</sup> William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863), *The History of Henry Esmond*, 1852.

<sup>3</sup> Tobias Smollett (1721-1771); Henry Fielding (1707-1754); Jonathan Swift (1667-1745).

up with fireworks to be baited (i.e., tortured).  
(Lecky, England in the 18<sup>th</sup> Cen. Vol I P. 599.)<sup>4</sup>

Cock-fighting was also common, in schools and among all classes of people. In 1705 its merits and advantages were set forth in "An Essay on the Innocent and Royal Recreation and Art of Cocking."<sup>5</sup> The essayist hoped that this great form of sport might become a popular local and very common—it being so innocent—past-time. Sometimes, it is said, the church bells were rung in honor of a victory in the inter-county cock-fights. Of course hunting in various forms served as the country gentleman's great method of satisfying his passion for excitement. Gambling was very common, both among men and women. It is not quite clear whether the mania for gambling is the cause, the result or simply an attendant circumstance to the mildest kind of speculations which men and women rushed headlong, in their mad desire for money. The South Sea Bubble was only one of many that led the get rich quick people to the great panic when the bubbles exploded. Lotteries were regarded as a legitimate method of performing charitable duties. One peculiar witness of this is Hollis Hall at Harvard<sup>6</sup> which was built from the proceeds of a lottery.

Not only was the coarseness and vulgarity of the times exhibited here, but also in the condition of the stage. Not in high art, not in literary interest, but simply the power of the stage to produce vulgar obscene entertainments was its influenced best. But perhaps the greatest reproach is that all this stage vulgarity was permitted for obscenities sake. It was not lightened even by the slightest sense of delicacy and refined feelings.

But this brings us to a point where we come in contact with what was really the heart and core of the trouble. There was no place for art, except of that sort which

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<sup>4</sup> William E. H. Lecky, *A History of England in the Eighteen Century*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1878. Vol 1, pp. 552-3. Different page numbers likely come from different editions.

<sup>5</sup> Likely, William Machrie, *An Essay Upon the Royal Recreation and Art of Cocking*, Edinburgh: James Watson, 1705.

<sup>6</sup> Hollis Hall, Harvard University, 13 Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA, built 1763.

seemed to satisfy the desire for ostentation and display. Portrait painting flourished, and lived upon the vanity of shallowness. Art in other forms went begging. The struggle of Handel the great composer of music is well known. It became "one of the signs of good taste among fashionable people to ridicule his music," says Lecky.<sup>7</sup>

While the list of writers which appear during this period is considerable and their work is important, the interesting thing is that their interests somewhat reflect the commonplaceness of the life about them. There is little or no place of what we call the finer sentiments, and deeper thoughts. To deal with superficial things in a superficial way, and if led by chance to touch upon some topic of a finer quality, it was with the hand of blasé, indifference and irony. The truth seems to be that the finer sentiments of life had been crushed.

Deleted: 'e'

Perhaps this is illustrated by the attitude of the people toward religion. To revert to the subject of morality and religion, the subject which had been the sole topic of vital interest during the Puritan movement, seemed utterly impossible, to this Englishman of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, "In higher circles, everyone laughs, if one talks of religion," said Montesquieu on his visit to England.<sup>8</sup> The clergy had lost their standing, and were about on a par socially with the serving maid. They read prayers which no one attended.

They hung around the heels of their lords, and as one has said, their only duty seemed to be to be able to carry their lord to bed after he had become so drunk that he could no longer stand or walk. Recall the Parson of *Henry Esmond*. Even the most apologetic of church writers have to pass over this period with their eyes closed or else declare that the curate was a disgrace to the church while the Bishop and other higher dignitaries regarded their positions only as an easy means of getting money. One Bishop is said never to have visited his diocese. The fact

<sup>7</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *A History of England in the Eighteen Century*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1878. Vol 1,, p. 535

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in John Richard Green, *A Short History of the English People*, London: Macmillan and Co., 1875, p. 717

is they were on about the same plane as their drunken pleasure-seeking lords, with this exception that in general they were not quite so bold, and above board in acknowledging their sins. In the midst of the coarseness and vulgarity, which they should have demurred, they became helpless puppets who fawned and whined in the midst of it all. Among the more prominent people, Christianity had become merely a theme for scorn and was regarded as a mere fiction and superstition.

Of course the clergy lost their political influence, and the restraint which at times had been given to political life by the influence of the church was now withdrawn. In fact the world of politics shared the same fate as all the rest of society. It was corrupt venal. Bribery and graft were common. In fact the only method of accomplishing results either for the benefit or the injury of the nation was by the purchase of influence. Walpole's influence at this point is illustrative.<sup>9</sup>

That is a dark and gloomy picture, you say. Well, so be it. But we must now pass over the great middle class, and take up one or two points which show the relation of this brutal period upon the poor. I called this lecture, "Charity, a Degrading Influence in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century." You are wondering how there could be any such thing as charity in such an age. As a matter of fact there wasn't any such thing. Charity had become alms giving. The lavish, and ostentatious display, the reckless expenditure of money had produced its effect. An illustration is seen in the manner of paying servants. The custom which we call tipping had become so common that houses no longer paid their servants wages, but simply gave them board and a place to stop while the servant depended upon tips from the guests, and when a dinner party filed from the dining-room, it was compelled to run the gauntlet of the out-stretched hands of the butlers. Trouble and dissatisfaction with household servants was such in those days as to afford many a woman with a topic of conversation for all eternity.

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<sup>9</sup> Robert Walpole (1676-1745), de facto first Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1721-1742.

In 1704 the evils which this pernicious extravagance leads to came to the first in an attempt to extend the system of poor-law relief. Defoe, who writes with keenness and wisdom, issued a tract, "Giving Alms, No Charity."<sup>10</sup> He maintains that the pauperism of the country is not due to want of employment, but to habits of vagrancy, drunkenness, and extravagance. "I affirm," he says,

of my own knowledge, that when I wanted a man for laboring work, and offered 9 s. per week to strolling fellows at my door, they have frequently told me to my face that they could get more a-begging....<sup>11</sup>

[T]here is nothing more frequent than for an Englishman to work till he has got his pockets full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps drunk, till it is all gone, and perhaps himself in debt: and ask him in his cups what he intends, he'll tell you honestly that he'll drink as long as it lasts, and then go to work for more. ...

I make no difficulty to promise on a short summons, to produce above a thousand families in England, within my particular knowledge, who go in rags, and their children wanting bread, whose fathers can earn their 15 to 25 s. per week, but will not work. ... The reason why so many pretend to want work is that, as they can live so well on the pretense of wanting work, they would be mad to have it and work in earnest.<sup>12</sup>

So you see the vulgarity, the extravagance of the nobility is perfectly mirrored in the lives of the paupers. Who copies who, you cannot say. But the cursed alms giving, which often passes for charity, had seemed to transform whole armies of people into professional beggars. Charity had become a profession, as devoid of sentiment and

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<sup>10</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Giving Alms, No Charity*. London: Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1704.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Giving Alms, No Charity*. London: Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1704, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Giving Alms, No Charity*. London: Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1704, p.27.

healthiness, and human interest, as were the lives from which it emanated.

This is a gloomy and discouraging situation that we find England in after the fever of Puritanism had run its course. But it is really not so discouraging as it seems. As we have seen before, the Puritan movement was not positive in its work, but negative. It had but one great object in view, namely of establishing the truth that the so-called authority which the Catholic Church and English Church exercised, basing its claims upon a power which did not exist, was a fiction. That was accomplished. The natural reaction was such as we have seen. The real positive, active, aggressive work of building a new structure on the site of the old had as yet hardly begun. The moral power and vigor of Calvinistic Puritanism was still working its way to the surface among the middle classes. Its work was yet of a hidden, and even crude nature, but the power and vitality still existed in this vacation period of English history.

Already in the thick underbrush of the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century evidences of the new power were coming to the surface. Defoe was writing. Addison was dealing out morsels of literary merit in the Spectator. These found their way to many a breakfast table. Steele was helping.<sup>13</sup> There was a revival of Shakespeare's plays, which was as a breath of fresh air blowing across the foul atmosphere of the stage. Even the appearance of Handel was of no small moment. The coffee houses, where men of taste and interest came for conversation, were becoming popular, a tremendous improvement over the ale houses, and gin shops. Meantime, also manufacturing was increasing, and upon the basis of commercial and industrial prosperity this great extravagance and luxuriousness rested. That same Defoe who spoke with such acumen on the problem of begging, also describes in his "Tour Through Great Britain" (made in 1724-6)<sup>14</sup> the condition of industry. Speaking of the small manufacturers near Halifax in Yorkshire he says,

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph Addison (1672-1719); Richard Steele (1672-1729).

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Six volumes, 1724-26.

The land was divided into small enclosures, from two acres to six or seven each, seldom more. Every three of our pieces of land having a house belonging to it. ...<sup>15</sup>

[H]ardly a house standing out of speaking distance from another. ... we could see at every house a tenter, and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth or kersie, or shalloon, ... At every considerable house there was a manufactory...<sup>16</sup>

Every clothier keeps one horse at least to carry his manufactures to the market; ... and every one generally keeps a cow or two more for his family. ... By the means the small pieces of enclosed land about each house for they scarce sow corn enough to feed their cocks and hens. ...<sup>17</sup>

The houses are full of lusty fellows, some at the dye vat, some at the looms, others dressing the clothes; the women and children carding and spinning; being all employed from the youngest to the oldest, ...<sup>18</sup>

and not a beggar to be seen or and idle person... (Tour, III, p. 146.)<sup>19</sup>

This gives us a much more cheerful conception of England, for it is true that among these obscure people, things of real value were happening. Geo. Eliot's *Adam Bede*<sup>20</sup> is interesting as showing the emergence from the people who were doing the real work, a new set of thoughts and ideas. Upon said such as this, soil which still remained essentially ready for cultivation, after the purification

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<sup>15</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Volume 3, 1724-26, p. 97.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Volume 3, 1724-26, p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Volume 3, 1724-26, p. 100.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Volume 3, 1724-26, p. 101.

<sup>19</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Volume 3, 1724-26, p. 98. This whole quotation varies somewhat from the edition—and pagination—I have available.

<sup>20</sup> *Adam Bede*, the first novel by George Eliot, was published in 1859.

at the hands of the Puritan fever, upon this soil fell the words of Whitefield, and the Wesleys. Already they were growing into manhood, and were tracing in their minds the workings of thoughts and ideas which had been almost obliterated from England for three generation. For the time being we leave this as it is. Next Sunday evening we shall consider the great Methodist movement, and note from the Wesleys lay the foundation of modern religious conceptions.

