

THE SPECTRE OF WANT IN ENGLAND



Poverty Literally Sapping the Manhood of the Nation

IT WAS Christmas morning—last Christmas morning.

In London, in all the large cities of England, in the palatial country residences, in the luxurious homes of the well-to-do manufacturers and tradesmen, holly and mistletoe hung; Christmas gifts and Christmas cheer were everywhere; the library tables held the brilliantly tinted Christmas issues of the weekly and monthly magazines, while the daily papers vaunted, in austere black, the Christmas joy and merriment which the magazines depicted in their glaring colors.



Assembled in the churches, from London's great cathedral to Manchester's great cathedral, the well-to-do and contented listened to lord bishops and other ministers intone the services of the festive day.

But the fashionable congregation at the Manchester cathedral was astounded, when, up into the pulpit stepped a man whom only those closest to him recognized as Stewart Gray, land law reformer, and recently superintendent of the Manchester Poor Farm Colony.

they were condemned, he discerned a real danger to any state in the sickly and stunted condition of those who had not sufficient air to breathe or room to move in.

Numbers, he said, were rejected for service in South Africa from England's great towns as being physically unfit.

"And," exclaimed the lord bishop, "if the physical effect is palpable and obvious, the moral effect is no less evident to those who have eyes to see."

But few, far too few, have had eyes to see; or, seeing, have had hearts to feel, or—most blighting of all—have had minds to understand.

It has been a good many centuries since William the Conqueror turned loose his noble retainers, and told them they could keep all the land they were able to hold. They slaughtered most of the natives, and they starved the rest.

Organization of English society, which was made on that basis, has progressed along the original lines. And, in the centuries, it has progressed so destructively that the population, which at first had the courage to fight, has now only the resignation to starve.

And all who are not going hungry have so lost the spirit of self-preservation that they unite in abject

laudation of the system of nobility which dooms them to ultimate extinction.

In England, half a century ago, one-third of the population of 19,000,000 people were supported by agriculture. Today, the population has fairly doubled, while there are over a million fewer people engaged in husbandry than there were fifty years ago.

There are 21,000,000 acres of land going to waste in Great Britain, with pheasants, grouse and rabbits for their inhabitants. The humans, by the system of government and ownership, have been driven to the large cities.

There they have shrunk and shriveled and starved. Whole families have grown to maturity who never had enough to eat in all their lives. They have been half starved not merely from the hour of their birth, but during the months before they came into the world.

George Bernard Shaw has found that, year in and year out, in London, 33 per cent. of the working population live "below the poverty line"—live on less than \$5 for the provision of all necessities of life for a family of six.

There are in London nearly 200,000 tenements—omitting the dome of heaven, which shelters 1700 of the absolutely homeless nightly—that consist of only one room.

Statistics which would be considered obsolete in the face of the present misery proved that 29,000 of those "tenements"—the word used for describing homes for families—contained three people; more than 16,000 contained four; over 7000 held five; more than 2500 held half a dozen; 850 held seven, and 250 held eight. And the rest contained as high as a dozen and more persons—in one room.

"It," remarked the lord bishop of London, "the physical effect is palpable and obvious, the moral effect is no less evident."

And these people, starving by the million, paying rents that are the acme of extortion, gasping for air in single rooms, where the windows are stuffed with papers, have not revolted—yet.

The metropolis, almost in its entirety, is owned by seven noble landlords, and the land, even compared with improved land as exploited for revenue by Amer-

ican municipalities, is practically exempt from taxation.

It pays the duke of Westminster \$2,250,000 a year. It pays the earl of Cadogan \$4,000,000. It pays the dukes of Portland and Norfolk, respectively, \$3,500,000 and \$4,000,000.

There are 100,000 little shops, little dwellings and insufferable slums in the Southwark and Lambeth districts; they pay the earl of Northampton \$3,000,000 a year. The duke of Bedford, the marquis of Camden, Lord Ilchester and Lord Northbrook all take their toll—and one-sixth of London gasps for air and hungers for food.

And where there is work, the very factories employing young girls are invaded by the modern liquor clubs, that compel innocence and decency to debauch itself, as in Birmingham, where the factory operatives have been ruined in morals and unfitted to bear children by the curse of drink.

Jack London, when he investigated London's poverty, declared that more than 20 per cent. of the population depended on charity for support; that nearly 2,000,000 were always on the ragged edge of want, and that, in the United Kingdom, starvation—not mere, annoying hunger, but killing starvation—continually confronted 8,000,000 pinched bodies and despairing souls.

England, for twenty years, ever since the mob invaded Mayfair and howled for food, has been trying to forget it, and knitting woolen socks for the worthy poor.

But her statesmen this year fear they may be compelled to recognize the grim alternative: reform or revolution.

THE NEW CULT of the CACTUS EATER



CACTUS for breakfast; cactus for luncheon; cactus for dinner; cactus to eat, cactus to drink; cactus cooked and raw. This, for two weeks, was the diet of Dr. Leon Elbert Landone and his secretary, Frank Waterston, of Los Angeles, California.

We have heard of the hashish eaters, and know the method in their madness. Having partaken of the Oriental drug, they saw wonderful visions. But the cactus gives no such result, and the cactus eaters have no such end in view.

Dr. Landone ate cactus to prove that a human

being could subsist on the plant. He has demonstrated this. Therefore, there is no longer any danger of man starving in any desert where cactus grows. The spineless varieties of the plant, evolved by Luther Burbank, will be introduced into the desert as a food for cattle and men.

Dr. LANDONE began his cactus-eating test on December 1 last and ended it on December 14 with a banquet, given to his friends, the major portion of the menu of which was composed of various preparations of the cactus plant.

At the dinner Dr. Landone declared that during his experiment he had felt no fatigue, and had gained one-half pound in weight.

"Eat cactus, lettuce, spinach and asparagus if you do not wish to get tired out by the ordinary day's work," he told his friends. "Meats, nuts, cereals, beans and peas help to repair wasted tissues and are of value, but the very best way to repair the body is to preserve it so that little repair is necessary."

At the dinner Dr. Landone looked happy and healthy, as well fed as could be. He had proven, he said, without doubt, that the cactus, among the plants of which men had starved in the desert, was a nutritious article of food. The cactus he used, however, was the spineless variety evolved some time ago by Luther Burbank, the California plant wizard.

This cactus is entirely lacking in spines, the needles being reduced to a mere bud on the hide. It is Mr. Burbank's plan to distribute the cactus through the deserts of the West, where it will serve as a food both to cattle and man. The importance of this work may be realized when one considers that of the \$4,000,000 square miles of land in the country there are 1,000,000 square miles of arid territory.

Often men get lost in the deserts and wander for days, suffering excruciatingly from hunger and thirst. When the spineless cactus is grown this danger will pass; the hot sandy plains will lose much of their terror.

Cactus is a food—this is what Dr. Landone declares he has proven it to be. And in doing so he demonstrates the truth of the claim of Burbank, who robbed the thorny cactus of its forbidding spines.

However, if prepared after the method devised by the Los Angeles physician, there is little doubt that

it must be palatable. For instance, among the things on the daily menu during the experiment appeared cactus soup, fried cactus leaves, salad made of cactus, cactus juice as a drink and cactus fruit as a dessert.

In the meals the order observed was as follows: Cactus for breakfast, cactus and celery for lunch, cactus, a few nuts and celery for dinner.

During the two weeks of the test Dr. Landone worked eighteen hours a day. His purpose was to prove that the body could do the maximum amount of labor with little loss of energy if cactus were eaten.

The brain, he declared, became less fatigued when the body was nourished on the ungainly plant of the desert than when fed by other food.

Fried or raw, the cactus resembles eggplant. Cooked and flavored it is said to be quite palatable.

of trying to extract life from the unsympathetic and intimidating plant.

Mr. Burbank worked on the cactus for ten years. He found that whereas the cactus which grew on the open plains was formidably armed, the varieties that grew high up on rocks and in crevices took less precautions to safeguard themselves. Mr. Burbank selected some of the varieties which had discarded most of their spines, and began a process of selection and rearing.

After ten years of effort he evolved a leaf which is as smooth as an apple. Mr. Burbank claims that the thornless cactus is almost as nourishing as alfalfa, and will enable men to raise cattle in heretofore arid territory.

Dr. Landone's experiments may possibly make cactus an item on the menus of our fashionable hotels—who can tell? Who knows but a new cult of esthetic people will make cactus their diet? For Dr. Landone claims it gives nutrition to the body and brain, enabling a man to do mental work for eighteen hours without fatigue.

You may laugh. But it is pointed out by those interested that both the tomato and potato were regarded as curiosities when first evolved.

While Dr. Landone in California was living on the cactus, Dr. T. J. Allen, of Aurora, Ill., was living on peanuts. On December 17 Dr. Allen finished a food test extending over sixty days, during which time he ate only peanuts and drank lemonade.

During this time the doctor lost twelve pounds, but at the end of the test he said he never felt better in his life. He calculated that his "board" had cost him at the rate of 15-cents a day.

Dr. Allen declared that he considered the peanut an ideal food. He said it was palatable and satisfied one, that it improved the skin, gave one a lovely complexion and made the hair grow. During his test the doctor ate sixty pounds of peanuts, at the rate of one pound a day.

DOCTORS LIKED IT

When he completed his experiment, Dr. Landone invited six fellow-physicians to dinner, and they, too, had a chance to eat cactus. One and all said it was delicious. Among the things provided for the table was cactus sherbet.

Dr. Landone secured the cactus leaves and fruit during his experiment from Mr. Burbank, who is raising the cactus at Santa Rosa. From a commercial standpoint, the diet at present would be an expensive one, as the value of one of the thornless leaves is \$600.

In producing a spineless cactus, Luther Burbank scored a final victory against one of the most formidable fighters of mankind in the vegetable kingdom. Centuries ago, when the intelligent cactus found that it was likely to be eaten and exterminated by the animals roving in the desert, it took on itself an armor of sharp spines and needles, so that thereafter the tall, grotesque plant was safe from animals and birds.

Some specimens assumed a sword-like leaf, others covered themselves with sharp spikes, while others grew tough, thin thorns. Every spines and there are said to be about 1000—adopted some sort of armor, so that when he was lost in the desert, man never thought

A Quaint Little Island That Produces Salt

One of the west coast of France is the little Ile-de-Re, eighteen miles long and varying in width from seventy yards to two miles. It contains fewer square yards than the city of Paris.

During the summer salt making is one of the chief industries of the inhabitants. The salt beds are formed in large squares, separated from each other by low ridges. These are overflowed in the springtime, and as the water evaporates the deposit of salt is raked out with a long narrow board attached to a pole and piled in heaps ready to be taken to the refinery nearby.

The peasant women work with the same ease as the men in the salt and oyster beds, at the catching of shrimps and also in the fields. While engaged in these labors they wear baggy knee-breeches, loose waists and light-colored sunbonnets. The sabots of the winter have been put aside, and the feet are left bare, although the legs of old stockings are often drawn up as far as the knee as a protection from the heat and insects. It is indeed a country of trousers. Nor does it stop with humanity, for many of the donkeys, as well, wear long striped red and white or blue and white coverings on their legs. These are to keep off the swarms of flies and mosquitoes.

Wedding costumes on the island are rather singular, viewed from our standpoint. The gown of the bride is always black in velvet or satin for the well-to-do and in woolen for the poorer classes, but the veil is of white muslin trimmed with wide lace, which is oftentimes an heirloom, and has a broad white ribbon bow in front reaching to the bottom of the dress.

The long bridal veil is attached in graceful folds to her sugar-loaf shaped coiffure, which had its high peak adorned with several garlands of artificial orange blossoms, and a long necklace and the bouquet are also of the same flower.

Ample opportunity is given for displaying all the sherry of the bride and groom, followed by their relatives and intimate friends walking by couples, go on foot to and from the church. Then, again, after the marriage feast, the whole wedding party promenades two or three times about the town, oftentimes to the unmelodious accompaniment of a flute and a shrill hornet. After this there is a supper and dance, and if the family are in prosperous circumstances the festivities are continued the next day.

Some of the customs of these simple folk are most primitive. They have their own original manner of threshing their barley. The straw is swept up and the barley is swept into heaps and shoveled into boxes. As carts and foot-passengers have passed continually through the street during the day one cannot help questioning the cleanliness of the barley thus produced.

A Children's Hotel

AT one of the English beaches there has a children's hotel. At first it seemed strange—almost barbarous—to the mothers, but when they found that milk fresh from the cow, new laid eggs, homemade jams and cakes and other appropriate food that they could not obtain at places of residence designed primarily for grownups were supplied in abundance at the children's hotel, they hastened to move them into it with a nurse, governess or other attendant.

The hotel has the best situation on the beach, and is arranged and furnished in the way best suited to children's needs.

AGHAST AT DECADENCE

The working man eating the dirty oats has returned to them now, the personification of the man of straw, lower than the poorest of England's beasts.

It is a degrading, which has not heeded the long procession of starving women in London, which used its "starving in order" its demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of hungry workmen, stands aghast before the complete decadence.

The hungry, mailed and armored more heavily than the soldiers of nations at sea, knows itself shrunken and helpless within its shell at home.

It exists in a state of maintaining its eternal bluff of invincibility, clinging its life blood to strengthen its armor in the navy, bartering its ships to Japan for a few more millions, it cannot muster in England and trading its left to France for the sake of the stunted remnants of Napoleon's conquests—for those under the descendants of his grenadiers, who now, dwarfed as they are, still have the courage to fight.

In London today a million people are hungered; in England, twenty millions are hungered. As far back as 1891 the lord bishop of London, Arthur Foley Winnington-Ingram, declared he had himself lived in Bethnal Green, and could testify to the physical, moral and spiritual effects of the conditions prevalent in the capital of Great Britain.

In addition to those who annually died as infants from overcrowding in the fearful tenements to which