

SUMMARY

OF

MR. OWEN'S PLAN,

FOR THE

PERMANENT RELIEF

OF THE WORKING CLASSES.



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SUMMARY, & c.

IN the centre of from 600 to 1200 acres of land, it is proposed to erect a large square, capable of accommodating about 1200 persons, men, women and children. To give both children and adults the best *education*, consisting of the introduction of every circumstance favourable to the formation of good character, and the exclusion of whatever might be productive of a contrary result; the whole founded upon a system of instruction combined with amusement and conducted with such undeviating kindness, as to supersede the necessity of either reward or punishment.

Each person, according to his ability, to labour for the good of the whole, their employment being directed by an economical arrangement, which shall combine their interest – unite their exertions – provide for the beneficial introduction of scientific improvements, and diminish expenditure; from which will inevitably result comfortable subsistence and surplus of productions; from the abundance and low cost of which there will be no difficulties in either

exchanging or disposing of them: the proceeds will be applied to the payment of rent, interest, taxes, and expenses of the establishment – to the return of the capital originally invested, and to provide for the probable increase of the establishment.

A community on this plan is proposed to be established at Motherwell, near New Lanark, under the immediate inspection of Mr. Owen. The funds necessary are now raising by loans of £25 and upwards, at legal interest.

The success of the plan depends upon the harmony of the inhabitants, and their being able to pay the expenses of the establishment. The harmony of the community will be secured by the system of education, and upon its being so clearly the interest of all to live harmoniously; nor is there any reason why men should be less inclined to unite for their *own* interest, than they are for the interest of a *master*.

The system of education has already been proved to be efficacious by the extensive experiment at New Lanark; the thousands of visitors to that spot bear ample testimony to the happiness that reigns there. In all his plans, Mr. Owen proceeds upon the simple principle, that “the character of every individual is formed *for* him and not *by* him”, this enables him to calculate with certainty the effect of circumstances, and produces in everyone who admits it, undissembled charity to all men. That the establishment will pay its expenses will be evident from the following calculations.

The buildings have been accurately designed, working drawings for the builders prepared, and every expense attending their erection has been estimated with great care, at the present cost of materials and labour in the city of Glasgow, being the nearest extensive market for these articles to the proposed establishment, and 10 per cent. on the whole has been added for contingencies

The cost of these erections has been found to be about	£34,260
To which add, for furnishing the apartments &c. of 300 families	3,600
Fitting up school room, and places of worship for Dissenters	300
Ditto church	400
Ditto infirmary	200
Ditto lecture room	240
Ditto inn	500
Ditto library	500
 Making the entire cost about	 £40,000

Interest of £40,000	2,000
Rent of land	1,500
Farming stock, &c.	750
Clothing, &c. 300 families at £20	6,000
Taxes and contingencies	500
	£10,750

Now, in the working population of 1200 individuals there appears, from the most accurate data that can be attained, an average of

248 individuals, male and females, under 10 years of age.
178 ditto ditto from 10 to 15
719 ditto ditto from 15 to 60
55 ditto ditto from 60 and upwards

In the following calculation the labour of the 248 children under ten years of age, is not taken into account, nor the labour of 32 individuals employed in various domestic purposes and superintendence, nor of 35 who are supposed to be at all times ineffective, either from indisposition or other causes.

The annual value of the labour of the community will then be as follows:—

165 individuals from 10 to 15, at 4s. per week	1,716
680 ditto from 15 to 60, at 10s. ditto	17,680
40 ditto above 60, at 5s. ditto	520
 Total value of labour	 £19,916
Total expenditure	£10,750
 Surplus	 £9,166

But, if it should be said that no saving can be made by combined exertions and expenditure, and that the expenses of the establishment should be estimated by the actual expenses of a family, according to the present mode of living, the account will stand thus:—

By an accurate calculation made in the expenditure of the working classes, at New Lanark, whose population is well known to be sufficiently supplied, it is found that the average expenditure of each family does not exceed £45 per annum, including rent and all expenses.

Value of the labour of 300 families, as above	£19,916
300 families, at £45 per annum	£13,500
Surplus	£6,416

From the preceding calculations it is evident, that *the inhabitants of these establishments will be in full possession, even at the commencement of their exertions, of far more substantial advantages than are now acquired by many of the middle classes at an expenditure of several hundreds per annum.*

The difference between the condition of the working classes in the manufacturing towns, and in the proposed villages may be thus contrasted:

<i>In the Manufacturing Towns</i>	<i>In the proposed Villages</i>
<p>The poor and working classes now usually live in garrets, or cellars, within narrow lanes or confined courts.</p> <p>They are surrounded with dirt, enveloped in smoke, and they seldom have a pleasant object on which to fix their eye.</p>	<p>The poor and working classes will live in dwellings formed into a large square, rendered in every way convenient, and usefully ornamented.</p> <p>They will be surrounded by gardens – have abundance of space in all directions to keep the air healthy and pleasant; they will have walks and plantations before them, within the square, and well cultivated ground kept in good order around, as far as the eye can reach.</p>

<p>Parents are oppressed with anxiety to secure the means of subsistence for themselves and children.</p> <p>Each family has the care and trouble of going to market, to supply their individual wants, and under every disadvantage.</p> <p>Each family must have domestic arrangements for cooking, &c. and one person must be wholly occupied in preparing provisions, &c. for a family of ordinary numbers.</p> <p>The parents must toil from 10 to 16 hours in the day to produce the wretched subsistence which they obtain for themselves and children, and very often under circumstances most unfavourable to health and rational enjoyments.</p> <p>In bad times, and which frequently occur, the parties experience a distress not easily to be described.</p> <p>In case of sickness, every evil takes place among these individualised beings.</p> <p>The early death of parents leaves the children orphans, and subject to every evil.</p> <p>The children are usually sickly, and as well as the parents, ill clothed.</p>	<p>In consequence of the principle of mutual co-operation, being understood and practised to its full extent, the necessaries and comforts of life are enjoyed by all in abundance.</p> <p>Under the proposed arrangements the same trouble will provide for 1000 as it now requires for one family; and all articles will be procured on the best terms.</p> <p>The best provisions will be cooked in the best manner, under arrangements that will enable five or six individuals easily to prepare provisions for 1000.</p> <p>The parents will be healthily and pleasantly occupied not more than 8 hours in the day.</p> <p>Under the arrangements proposed, no bad time can occur from a change of markets, or from any commercial uncertainties, as the parties will always have a plentiful stock of all things necessary.</p> <p>In the event of sickness, the utmost attention and care will be experienced; every one, both from principle and interest, will be active, and have pleasure in rendering the situation of the invalid as comfortable as possible.</p> <p>The early death of parents leaves the children, in all respects, well provided and protected.</p> <p>The children will be ruddy and healthy, and as well as their parents, neat, clean, and properly clothed.</p>
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<p>The young children are much neglected, and hourly acquire bad habits.</p> <p>The education of the children is neglected.</p> <p>The children are sent early in life to some one trade or manufactory, usually of a very unhealthy nature, and at which they must attend for ten hours or more per day.</p> <p>The children are trained under ignorant persons, possessing many bad habits.</p> <p>Scolding, coercion, and punishment are the usual instruments of training here.</p> <p>This is the abode of poverty, vice, crime, and misery.</p>	<p>The children will be well looked after, and be prevented from acquiring bad, and taught good habits.</p> <p>The children are all well trained and well informed.</p> <p>The children are gradually instructed in gardening, agriculture, and some trade or manufacture, and only employed according to age or strength.</p> <p>The children will be trained by intelligent persons, possessing only good habits.</p> <p>But here kindness and good sense will be the only instruments of training.</p> <p>While this will ever be the abode of abundance, active intelligence, correct conduct, and happiness.</p>
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EMIGRATION

At a period when so many persons are driven, by the pressure of the times, to emigrate to foreign lands, it may, perhaps, be considered of some importance to institute a comparison between emigration and the excellent plan of Mr. Owen, of New Lanark. It is a great mistake to suppose that Mr. Owen's plan is applicable to the lowest classes only. The advantages arising from united exertions and united expenditure are as great, perhaps greater, in proportion to the knowledge, taste, intelligence and property, possessed by the parties so uniting. There are, perhaps, few families who emigrate, who do not possess £50 for each individual in their families, or who could not, among their friends, raise a loan to that amount, provided good security could be given.— For so small a sum as £200 for a family, 3000 families, of four individuals each,

might unite and become possessed of twenty-fold the advantage they could possibly derive from emigration. The two may be briefly compared thus:—

<i>Mr. Owen's Plan</i>	<i>Emigration</i>
£50 per head sufficient to begin with considerable comfort.	Passage to Van Diemen's Land, said to be the most eligible spot for emigrants, £50 and nothing left to begin with.
Comfortable subsistence.	Mere subsistence at first, with the hope of better.
Clothing cheap, being manufactured chiefly by themselves. The best education for their children.	Clothing scarce, and very expensive. Education necessarily very much neglected, all hands being employed in raising food.
Plentiful supply of good books.	Books, scarce, and very expensive.
In the land of their fathers, and able to see their friends when they please.	In a strange land, and at a distance from all their friends, and surrounded by savages.
In case of sickness or accident, the best medical advice on the spot.	Medical advice precarious, and probably at a great distance.
In case of death, the children well provided for.	No provision for their children, except their own exertions.
In case of becoming dissatisfied, at liberty to leave the establishment with the money they first advanced, and any additional sum the community may think proper.	In case of becoming dissatisfied, with scarcely the possibility of returning home, their property being probably all gone.

It has been urged against Mr. Owen's plan, that by making mankind so happy, the world would become over-populated; and much has been latterly said about "population pressing upon subsistence"; now whatever truth there may be in such a doctrine some centuries hence, that it does not apply to the present time will be evident from the following consideration:— four acres and a half of land are necessary to the supply of one horse. In Ireland one man can easily cultivate an acre of potatoes, which will support twelve persons, allowing each seven pounds per diem

Consequently the land that supports one horse will support fifty-four Irishmen!

It has been estimated that in Europe and America there is not more than one person to every 213 acres. Now every acre, by spade cultivation, will support two persons comfortably; 213 acres would therefore amply support 416 persons instead of one, so that Europe and America must have its population multiplied 416 times before there could be the least deficiency of *comfortable* subsistence; and if the inhabitants of Europe and America were like the Irish, their numbers might be increased no less than 2556. The latter, of course, is an extreme case, but the former may very fairly be considered a proof that we are not yet arrived at that period when "population presses on subsistence".

The British and Foreign Philanthropic Society receive loans for the establishment of the community at Motherwell, near New Lanark; and also subscriptions and donations for promoting a knowledge of Mr. Owen's excellent plans, and facilitating their introduction.

Office of the society, 23, south entrance Exchange-buildings, Threadneedle-street. Hours of attendance from one to three daily. Treasurers, J.L. Goldsmid, Esq. and W. Fry, Esq.

The annexed Cut represents one of the proposed villages – the square will be as spacious as the largest square in London; it will be surrounded with gardens, and the interior will be laid out in pleasure grounds and playgrounds.– The various parts of the buildings in the centre, are fitted out for the purposes of schools, places of worship, library, lecture room, dining halls, and rooms for recreation – the four houses in the centres of the sides are for the superintendents of the children, schoolmaster, surgeon, and public store.– One of the two buildings projecting from the corner of the square, is the inn for the accommodation of strangers, and the other building is the infirmary.– The manufactory, slaughter house, washing house, and farming offices, are placed at a short distance outside the square.

