

SQUALID DISTRICTS DISAPPEAR

Applied Populism Brings Health and Happiness to English Cities

(Sixth Article.)

In 1875 the most squalid district in England lay like a festering sore adjacent to the business center of Birmingham. It was thus described by Counselor White in an eloquent plea before the town council for improved conditions:

"It is not easy to imagine the dreary desolation which acre after acre in the very heart of the town presents to those who will take the trouble to visit it. Little else is to be seen but bowing roofs, tottering chimneys, tumble down and disused shops, heaps of bricks, broken windows and coarse rough pavements, damp and sloppy. In one case I found a house of only two rooms, about nine feet square and six and a half feet high, and in this hovel lived husband, wife and four children. Amid such deplorable conditions 12,000 of our fellow townsmen are spending their lives, with no bright thing about them and nothing of joy or gladness in their homes."

Joseph Chamberlain was then mayor of Birmingham, and the city had not yet attained the proud distinction of the metropolis of midland England, nor had that brilliant young man climbed far toward his present fame. He had evinced marked talents in municipal affairs and was an enthusiastic advocate of public ownership—so much so, in fact, that his political enemies declared him a socialist. It was due to his efforts and energy that Birmingham had purchased the gas plant and the waterworks from private owners, and the success which followed these ventures gave him a prestige of which he was not slow to take advantage. The desolate tract populated with thousands of miserable persons aroused his sympathy, but he was more than a social reformer; he was one of the shrewdest business men in Great Britain. He surveyed the field as a general does one of a coming battle. He formulated a plan, one so startling in its originality, so radical in its scope and so stupendous in its magnitude that his friends and supporters hesitated when he proposed it to them.

Mr. Chamberlain urged that Birmingham proceed to purchase every foot of land in this contaminated area, and he included in it fifty or more acres practically in the center of the city. He proposed to ignore all existing street lines and to devote a large percentage of the land to broad thoroughfares. He proposed to demolish every house in this district, to lease part of the site to reputable landlords who would erect dwellings under the supervision of the city authorities and to lease the remainder of the land for business purposes. He admitted that for years this investment would impose a burden on the taxpayers, but contended that in the end it would prove a splendid investment. More than that, the eradication of the slum area would increase the value of every foot of property in the city.

The future statesman formally introduced the matter to the town council and, in one of the most masterly speeches of his career, urged its adoption. He claimed that Birmingham could never aspire to the commercial supremacy of its natural territory so long as it permitted thousands of its townsmen to live in misery.

"I believe," he said, "that the town and, above all, the next generation, will have cause to bless the town council of Birmingham if it carries out this scheme and exercises what I venture to call a sagacious audacity. We know how from time to time upon our coast vast operations have been undertaken by which large tracts of land have been redeemed from the sea, and what was formerly the sandy bed of the ocean has been converted into smiling fields. I say that no less meritorious and no less necessary is the work which we are undertaking in this inland city by which we hope to wrest from the fell grasp of disease, misery and crime whole populations which would otherwise be abandoned to them.

"I heard it said the other day that the position of these people was their own fault. Their fault? Yes, it is legally their fault if they steal, and when they do we send them to jail, and if they commit murder we hang them for it. But if the members of this council had been placed under similar conditions—if from infancy we had grown up in the same way—does any of us believe that he should have run no risk of the hangman or the jail? For my part I have not sufficient confidence in my own inherent goodness to believe that anything can make headway against such frightful conditions as I have described. The

fact is it is no more the fault of these people that they are vicious and intemperate than it is that they are stunted, deformed, debilitated and diseased. The one is due to physical atmosphere. The moral atmosphere as necessarily and surely produces the other. It is the only occasion for which I ever wish to live beyond the ordinary term of human life in order to see the results of these improvements and to hear the blessings which will be showered on those who have the courage to begin them."

The above is a brief extract from a speech which aroused the staid Birmingham councillors and aldermen to enthusiasm, as by a unanimous vote they indorsed and adopted the plan of their youthful colleague. This was in 1875.

Few men have lived to see so wild a dream come true. As I stood in Corporation street, which traverses what once was the foul center of Birmingham's slum district, I wondered what are Joseph Chamberlain's sensations when he gazes on that magnificent thoroughfare, the finest in Great Britain outside of London. Where the hovels once reeked in filth great marts and business palaces rear their fronts. The district from which respectable persons turned with loathing is now the fashionable shopping district. Delicate fabrics have taken the place of the rags of the pauper. As if Aladdin's magician had waved a wand, the grewsome district has disappeared. I would rather be Joseph Chamberlain and walk up Corporation street, Birmingham, than be able to pay the Russian national debt.

At an expense of \$8,500,000 the city purchased about forty-five acres of slums and proceeded to transform an irregular strip having an extreme length of about a mile. Starting at New street, one of the best business thoroughfares, it surveyed a broad road through the center of its new and strange property. Having laid out new streets in every direction, the municipality offered the frontage to those who were willing to build in consideration of seventy-five year leases. There was a demand from powerful interests that the leaseholds be extended to ninety-nine years, but Mr. Chamberlain was firm in his resolve that Birmingham should come into full possession of its reward at the end of the shorter term. He insisted that it would be possible to rent every square foot of the land on the terms specified, and his judgment was accurate. He also predicted that the average annual charge against the taxes would not exceed \$60,000. This would meet the interest on the bonds and make up the deficit after allowing for rents and other revenues. In brief, he estimated that the eventual cost of the investment would not exceed \$4,500,000.

The scheme has been greatly enlarged since its inception, but when the last payment is made in 1950 Birmingham will own in fee simple the most valuable tract of real estate in the world, and the price paid will fall below that set by the "boy mayor," who has a chance to live to see the partial fruition of his "audacious sagacity." If offered for sale in the open market today the former slum hole would realize \$15,000,000. Its improvement did more than any one thing to make Birmingham the "metropolis of the midland counties." It is no exaggeration to assert that the decision of the council of 1875 had the direct effect of doubling the value of every square foot of land in the business district, and it would be impossible to put a money value on the blessings which have come with a lowered death rate, diminished crime, an aroused local pride and the prestige which comes from a great campaign valiantly and successfully pushed to success.

Ignatius Donnelly
We call him brave, who charges through
A firing line of deadly foes,
His work well done—God only knows
If it were well, or if he died
For hate or glory, who shall tell;
We only know that he defied
His foes, and a proud shaft arose,
To guard the spot whereon he fell.

One, gray, heartsore from truthless words,
And savage thrusts from shameless foes,
Thrust through by oligarchs with swords
Of beaten gold—behold! a sage arose,
A braver man could never be.
No braver man on earth or sea
And beat them back—Brave Donnelly.

Who fights afield and wins a name
All goryed, because he slew
Some luckless foeman—Christ, the shame
To call it glory—Behold! the true,
Grand man, the sage we knew,

IAMS' STALLIONS



Cheer up! Iams' roses are blooming. These are his "sweepstakes" stallions (over all). The patterns he sells at \$1000-\$1500. Iams' barns are "fall to the roof" with "topnotchers" and Iams has on his "selling clothes" every day—(always at home.)

He owns and sells more first-class stallions than any man in U. S. He is "stirring up the animals." He has "competitors out on the roof" watching him sell "top notchers" Iams hypnotizes his buyers with his class, young, sound, big "peaches and cream" stallions at "let live prices." Frenzied Finance is a "warm bunch." But it's a 1000 to 1 if you visit Iams and will pay cash or give bankable notes you will positively buy a stallion of him and save \$1000. Iams sells stallions "on honor." Iams has

80--Black Percherons, Belgians, Coachers--80
2 to 6 years old, wt 1700 to 2600 lbs., 90 per cent black, 50 per cent ton horses. All registered approved, stamped. It's a cinch that Iams will save you \$1000 and sell you a "money maker."

Farmer Ike! What a "rich graft" these "gold brick stallion salesmen" are working on the "honest farmer". Selling 4th rate stallions at 12000 to 50000 with worthless guarantees. Iams sells "top notchers" so good, big and cheap that they don't need to be "padded" to be sold. Iams sells direct to "users" saves buyers all commissions and "middle-man's profits."

\$1000-PAID AT IAMS-\$1000
Teddy, Iams "makes good" every statement in add or catalog. Guarantees stallions as good or better than pictures in catalog or pays you \$100 for trouble to see stallions. Iams is making

SPECIAL PRICES
For 60 days. He owns every 1st-2nd and sweepstakes winners in all ages at 1904 state fair, in Percherons, Belgians, Coachers. Iams shipped 100 stallions by "special train" 1904, the "wide-as-a-wagon kind."

Mr. Stallion Buyer, "Buttinsky." See Iams stallions yourself. Take no "gold brick stallion salesman's word. Look out for "knockers." Iams has "the goods" you read about. His establishment is worth going 2000 miles to see. Iams makes competitors "holler." He is knocking "high prices" out of the "Xmas tree". Iams saws wood, "Butts in" sells more stallions each year.

Georgie dear—be good—buy a stallion of Iams. His \$1200 stallions are much better than our neighbors paid those Ohio men \$4000 for. (Then I can wear the diamonds.) Iams speaks the languages—buys direct from breeders—pays no buyers, salesmen or interpreters, has no 2 to 10 men as partners to divide profits with. His 25 years of successful business makes him a safe man to do business with. Iams guarantees to sell a better stallion at \$1000 to \$1400 than are sold to Stock Cos. for \$2500 to \$5000 by slick salesmen" or pay you \$100 for trouble, you to judge. Iams pays horses freight, buyers are, gives 60 per cent breeding guarantee. Write for "eye opener." Greatest catalog on earth.

References: St. Paul State Bank and Citizens National Bank.

FRANK IAMS
St. Paul, - - - Nebraska

Percheron and Shire Stallions
When you go to buy a horse stop at Lincoln, Nebraska and see Watson Woods Bros. & Kelly's Percherons and Shires. 50 head on hand. Send for beautiful photographs of latest importation, and price list. These are free to all who mention The Independent. Address
WATSON WOODS BROS. & KELLY, Lincoln, Neb

New Steel Roofing and Siding
Painted red on both sides
\$2.00 Per 100 Square Feet.
Most durable and economical covering for Roofing, Siding or Ceiling, for Barns, Sheds, Houses, Stores, Churches, Postory Houses, Cribbs, etc. Cheaper and will last longer than any other material. Sheets six and eight feet long.
We Pay the Freight
to all points East of Colorado, except Indian Territory, Oklahoma and Texas. Write for prices for shipment to such points. This roofing at \$2.00 per square is our No. 10 grade, flat, semi-hardened. \$2.10 for corrugated. "V" crimped or pressed standing seam. \$2.25 for brick siding and boarded ceiling or siding. No experience necessary. Send us your order for immediate shipment. We have other grades.
WRITE FOR FREE CATALOGUE No. C. 4—on Building Material, Wire, Pipe, Plumbing Material, Furniture, Household Goods, etc. We Buy at Sheriff's and Receiver's Sales.
CHICAGO HOUSE WRECKING CO., 35th & Iron Sts., Chicago.

The scholar, true as steel was he,
He strove for truth and fair humanity.

Peace to his ashes—who dare say
He was not greater than the lord,
Who marshals hosts and wins the fray
On murderous fields, with bloody sword.
'Tis sacred soil wherein he lies,
Where prairie winds blow passing free.
A bugle call for liberty.
Rest, rest in peace, brave Donnelly.

The Old Guard falters, for the ranks
are thin,
And the soil is drenched beside the trail
That Cooper blazed, but truth shall win,
The harvest ripens for sickle and flail.

And he blew a little flame—
Winked one eye, while through the sanctum

A most sulphurous odor came.
"Tell your naked Kanderroos
Swinging under their bamboos,
I'm a pious business gentleman
Whom foolish men abuse.
'True—I press on to my goal
Though each penny costs a soul,
'Tis the way to honest profits—
These are strictly proper views—
In your donor's lists print me
As the Devil, and then see
Just how thankful you can be
To my Christian charitee,
And that never-falling bounty, and that
Providence of God!"
WILLIAM STEARNS DAVIS.
Cambridge, Mass.

Asking No Questions
In has armchair in his sanctum
Sat the President of the Board,
To the oiling he was writing,
"What rare good your gifts afford,
to the poor benighted heathen!
And we heartily disclaim
All intentions of rude questions
As to how you got the same.
We have met in solemn conclave
And have voted, as you see,
We're as thankful as can be
To your Christian charitee,
And the never-falling bounty and the
Providence of God."
Then the stranger puffed his lips out,

Stock Merchandise For Land
Large general stock of merchandise now running in a good Minnesota town and doing good business which I will exchange for good improved land and some cash.
FRED F. CLARK,
426 Boston Blk.,
Minneapolis, - Minnesota.