

MEDIAEVAL.

Chapter I. Early Middle Ages (to 843)

MEDIAEVAL.

Chapter I. Early Middle Ages (to 843)



CONSTANTIN

BOND

HISTORY OF PHILANTHROPY.

PART II MEDIAEVAL POOR RELIEF (A. D. 590-1517)

HISTORY OF PHILANTHROPY.

PART II MEDIAEVAL POOR RELIEF (A. D. 500-1517)

Section 1. Political and Economic development, in Italy, the Orient (and Poland, Russia), Gaul, Spain, England, Scandinavia.

This is the period which has been described in the learned and eloquent pages of Gibbon's great history, whose very title tells of mournful decay, the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire". But it is also the period in which the "barbarian peoples came into quickening contact with the ideas of Greece, Rome and Palestine under the leadership of monastic pioneers, when they formed stronger national governments, and when the genius of Charlemagne built up a vast political structure which did not long survive but left a permanent impression on history.

The Middle Ages in their main features are thus outlined by Dury (p. XIV, History of the Middle Ages):

"The important facts to be noted are:

The decline of the Roman Empire and the successful accomplishment of two invasions; the transient brilliancy of the Austrian civilization; the attempted organization of a new empire by Charlemagne, and its dissolution. The rise and prevalence of feudalism; the successive crusades; the contest between the Pope and the Emperor for the sovereignty of the world. We have here the real Middle Ages, simple in their general outline, and reaching their highest development in the thirteenth Century."

Section I. Political and Economic development, in Italy, the

Orient (and Poland, Russia), Gaul, Spain, England, Scandinavia.

This is the period which has been described in the learned and

eloquent pages of Gibbon's great history, whose very title tells of

morning decay, the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire". But it is

also the period in which the "barbarian peoples came into quickening

contact with the ideas of Greece, Rome and Palestine under the leader-

ship of monastic pioneers, when they formed stronger national govern-

ments, and when the genius of Charlemagne built up a vast political

structure which did not long survive but left a permanent impression on

history.

The Middle Ages in their main features are

thus outlined by Dury (p. XIV, History of the Middle Ages):

"The important facts to be noted are:

The decline of the Roman Empire and the successful accom-

plishment of two invasions; the transient brilliancy of the Arabian

civilization; the attempted organization of a new empire by Charlemagne,

and its dissolution. The rise and prevalence of feudalism; the successive

crusades; the contest between the Pope and the Emperor for the sovereignty

of the world. We have here the real Middle Ages, simple in their gen-

eral outline, and reaching their highest development in the thirteenth

Century."

(1)

Political and Economic Conditions in Italy,-

Odoacer, leader of Teutonic invaders, Mercenaries of Rome, became ruler of Italy in 476 A. D.. There were no more Roman Emperors of the West after Romulus Augustulus was deposed. In 493 A. D., Theodoric the Great (493-526) defeated Odoacer and founded the Kingdom of the East Goths (Ostrogoths) (493-555) in Italy, with his residence at Ravenna. The Kingdom of Lombardy (Langobards) was established in Italy by Alboin, and it existed from 568-774. Perhaps we should say, in the strict sense, that the Roman Empire had come to an end when Romulus Augustulus (475-476) was deposed from his throne by Odovaker (Odoacer), military leader of the Heruli and Rugii. (1)

(1) Ploetz, Epitome, p. 162)

Odoacer, leader of Teutonic invaders, Mercenaries of Rome, became ruler of Italy in 476 A. D.. There were no more Roman Emperors of the West after Romulus Augustulus was deposed. In 488 A. D., Theodoric the Great (483-526) defeated Odoacer and founded the Kingdom of the East Goths (Ostrogoths) (483-555) in Italy, with his residence at Ravenna. The Kingdom of Lombardy (Langobards) was established in Italy by Alboin, and it existed from 568-774. Perhaps we should say, in the strict sense, that the Roman Empire had come to an end when Romulus Augustulus (475-476) was deposed from his throne by Odoacer (Odoacer), military leader of the Heruli and Rugii. (1)

Gregory the Great (590-604, A. D.) was the last important man of the Greek-Roman Church. The Greek Church, formerly the home of Great Councils, theologians, philosophers and scholars, receded into the background; the Western Church inherited the conquering and organizing spirit of the Roman Empire.

As already noted, the Christian Church made spiritual conquests over the natives of Europe; and while the armed legions retreated before barbarian hordes the missionaries of the new faith and of civilization won them by persuasion, by heroic lives and by beneficent deeds.

(1) The Franks accepted Catholic Christianity about 496 A. D.; the East Saxons, in England, 597; the German East Franks through Boniface, 680-754).

At the time when Christianity came into contact with the peoples of the North they were passing from nomadic and pastoral to agricultural industries. They seem to have been classified as nobles, freemen, freedmen and bondmen. The Huns from Asia crowded the Germanic tribes and set them in motion, and their invasions of Italy made a reorganization of society necessary. Bonifacius, (680-754) a Benedictine monk preached Christianity to the East Franks and brought the Teutons under papal dominion.

Gregory the Great (590-604, A. D.) was the last important man

of the Greek-Roman Church. The Greek Church, formerly the home of Great Councils, theologians, philosophers and scholars, receded into the background; the Western Church inherited the conquering and organizing spirit of the Roman Empire.

As already noted, the Christian Church made spiritual conquests over the natives of Europe; and while the armed legions retreated before barbarian hordes the missionaries of the new faith and of civilization won them by persuasion, by heroic lives and by beneficent deeds.

(1) The Franks accepted Catholic Christianity about 486 A. D.; the East Saxons, in England, 597; the German East Franks through Boniface, 880-734.

At the time when Christianity came into contact with the peoples of the North they were passing from Nomadic and pastoral to agricultural industries. They seem to have been classified as nobles, freemen, freed-men and bondmen. The Huns from Asia crowded the Germanic tribes and set them in motion, and their invasions of Italy made a reorganization of society necessary. Boniface, (680-754) a Benedictine monk preached Christianity to the East Franks and brought the Teutons under papal dominion.

In Britain, after the Romans withdrew (about 410), various Teutonic peoples migrated into the country and settled there,- Jutes, Angles and Saxons, not yet Christianized. The population was divided into warring groups and centuries passed before a central government could be set up. Christianity, introduced about 180 A. D., gradually made its way among these tribes.

In Britain, after the Romans withdrew (about 410), various
Ternonic peoples migrated into the country and settled there. - Jutes,
Angles and Saxons, not yet Christianized. The population was divided into
waiting groups and centuries passed before a central government could
be set up. Christianity, introduced about 180 A. D., gradually made its
way among these tribes.

Gaul.

The Merovingian Clovis (481-511), leader of the Salic Franks, established rule in northern Gaul. In 496 he was converted to Catholic Christianity and baptized by Revingius, Bishop of Rheims. Pipin (741-768), son of Charles Martel, was the first Carolingian king of the Franks. Charlemagne (768-814), allied with the Pope, conquered the Saxons who accepted Christianity, and extended his rule into Italy, Spain, and Germany, was crowned Emperor of the West by the Pope in 800. After Charlemagne's death his empire fell soon into disorder; the Germans separated from the French.

Spain. The West Goth kingdom prevailed in Spain 507-711, its capital city being Toledo.

Gaul.

The Merovingian Clovis (481-511), leader

of the Salic Franks, established rule in northern Gaul. In 496 he

was converted to Catholic Christianity and baptized by Revingius,

Bishop of Rheims. Pipin (741-768), son of Charles Martel, was the

first Carolingian king of the Franks. Charlemagne (768-814), allied

with the Pope, conquered the Saxons who accepted Christianity, and ex-

tended his rule into Italy, Spain, and Germany, was crowned Emperor of

the West by the Pope in 800. After Charlemagne's death his empire fell

soon into disorder; the Germans separated from the French.

Spain. The West Goth kingdom prevailed in Spain 507-711, its capital

city being Toledo.

Mohamedanism:- To our story the rise of Mohamedanism is significant. (Hegira, 622 A. D.). After the religious faith of the Arabian prophet organized government and army it pursued hard upon the Christian nations for centuries, involved them in bloody and wasteful wars, and in every way influenced ^{the} expression of Christian beliefs and motives. The Moslem rule, of Arabian origin, was extended over Persia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and northern Africa. In 711 the Moors destroyed the Visigothic kingdom in Spain and henceforth ruled a part of the peninsula. In 732 the invasion of Gaul was arrested by Charles Martel between Tours and Poitiers. In the East (Haroun-al-Raschid of Bagdad) the Arabs cultivated science, art, medicine, manufactures, philosophy, and influenced Christian thought. In the West, as in Spain, the Moors represented the highest achievements of the intellectual life.

The one universal, unifying influence throughout these ages of local conflict and absence of political organization, was the Christian Church. Much as the people varied in language, customs, laws, governments and economic condition the doctrines and discipline of the Roman Church gave a kind of uniformity to life, and therefore we can speak of a system of poor relief and charity ^{over} a vast area, with certain definite principles, yet adopted to local circumstances. As this system was first formulated and developed in Italy, we must begin there. During the period we are now considering there were centers for its extension in Africa, Southern France, Spain, and in the North.

Mohammedanism. - To our story the rise of Mohammedanism is significant.
 (Hegira, 622 A. D.). After the religious faith of the Arabian prophet
 organized government and army it pursued hard upon the Christian nations
 for centuries, involved them in bloody and wasteful wars, and in every
 way influenced ^{the} expression of Christian beliefs and motives. The Moslem
 rule, of Arabian origin, was extended over Persia, Syria, Palestine,
 Egypt and northern Africa. In 711 the Moors destroyed the Visigothic
 kingdom in Spain and henceforth ruled a part of the peninsula. In 732
 the invasion of Gaul was arrested by Charles Martel between Tours and
 Poitiers. In the East (Haroun-al-Raschid of Bagdad) the Arabs cultivated
 science, art, medicine, manufactures, philosophy, and influenced Chris-
 tian thought. In the West, as in Spain, the Moors represented the high-
 est achievements of the intellectual life.

The one universal, unifying influence throughout these ages of
 local conflict and absence of political organization, was the Christian
 Church. Much as the people varied in language, customs, laws, govern-
 ments and economic condition the doctrines and discipline of the Roman
 Church gave a kind of uniformity to life, and therefore we can speak of
 a system of poor relief and charity ^{over} a vast area, with certain defi-
 nite principles, yet adapted to local circumstances. As this system
 was first formulated and developed in Italy, we must begin there. During
 the period we are now considering there were centers for its extension
 in Africa, Southern France, Spain, and in the North.

Section 2.

Poor Relief in Italy to 843.

The main course of the development in Italy, southern Gaul and Spain, up to Charlemagne, has been indicated in treating the preceding period.

The main course of the development in Italy, southern Gaul and Spain, up to Charlemagne, has been indicated in treating the preceding period.

The priest Dathens established a foundlings' home in Milan in 787, and gave as his reason that many unmarried mothers, to hide their shame, killed their infants and disposed of their corpses and "sent them to Tartarus for want of baptism." (1)

(1) Ratzinger, o. c. p. 272, note 4, citing Muratori.

Institutions of this kind were frequent in Europe and because of defective methods increased immorality without diminishing suffering. But the purpose was humane.

The priest, Dathens established a foundlings' home in Milan in 1787, and gave as his reason that many unmarried mothers, to hide their shame, killed their infants and disposed of their corpses and "sent them to Tartarus for want of baptism." (1)

(1) Retzinger, o. c. p. 272, note 4, citing Muratori.

Institutions of this kind were frequent in Europe and because of defective methods increased immorality without diminishing suffering. But the purpose was humane.

Sec. 3. Poor Relief in the Carolingian times in Western Europe.

The introduction of Christianity among the northern peoples carried with it the spirit and works of charity. The monks had no other means of converting the barbarian peoples except kindness, superior knowledge and useful arts. The nobles and freemen of the Teutonic tribes were accustomed to making their voices and votes count in their political and military assemblies, and they never ceased to exercise influence in ecclesiastical affairs. In Italy Christianity was established in cities and towns; while in the North the people were scattered and considerable centers of urban life were rare. For these reasons poor relief was less centralized than in Italy, and in the Frankish Church especially parish relief was the method of giving help to the poor, though the monasteries also were centers of benevolent activity.

In the fifth century the Gallic Church was vigorous, earnest and charitable; in the sixth century there was a decline manifested in worldliness, secular aggression, rudeness, neglect of the poor and appointment of the clergy by princes. In some cases the bishops, as landowners, were political personages, often rude, worldly and arrogant, and they treated the inferior clergy as slaves; suspended discipline, and under the Merovingians matters reached the lowest level. The monasteries were somewhat exempt from this decadence, but they were often plundered, oppressed or corrupted.

Boniface, bishop of Rheims (assassinated 755), sought to bring the church under better discipline; he undertook to establish regulations over the clergy; he called reform synods; he appealed to the Pope against secular rulers who oppressed the Church.

Sec. 2. Poor Relief in the Carolingian times in Western Europe.

The introduction of Christianity among the northern peoples carried with it the spirit and works of charity. The monks had no other means of converting the barbarian peoples except kindness, superior knowledge and useful arts. The nobles and freemen of the Teutonic tribes were accustomed to making their voices and votes count in their political and military assemblies, and they never ceased to exercise influence in ecclesiastical affairs. In Italy Christianity was established in cities and towns; while in the North the people were scattered and considerable centers of urban life were rare. For these reasons poor relief was less centralized than in Italy, and in the Frankish Church especially parish relief was the method of giving help to the poor, though the monasteries also were centers of benevolent activity.

In the fifth century the Gallic Church was vigorous, earnest and charitable; in the sixth century there was a decline manifested in worldliness, secular aggression, rudeness, neglect of the poor and appointment of the clergy by princes. In some cases the bishops, as landowners, were political personages, often rude, worldly and arrogant, and they treated the inferior clergy as slaves; suspended discipline, and under the Merovingian masters reached the lowest level. The monasteries were somewhat exempt from this decadence, but they were often plundered, oppressed or corrupted.

Boniface, bishop of Rheims (assassinated 753), sought to bring the church under better discipline; he undertook to establish regulations over the clergy; he called reform synods; he appealed to the Pope against secular rulers who oppressed the Church.

In the vigorous reforms of Charlemagne, the renowned prince, the patron of learning and religion, we may discover the marks of the wisest measures of the times.

Sources of poor relief in the times of Charlemagne were:

(1) property which was restored by Charlemagne, if it had been taken away from the Church; or its income was assured; (2) the parish system was enriched by endowments; (3) tithes were assessed and the proceeds were ordered to be paid to the local priest; (4) the traditional oblations in connection with public worship were received; (5) estates were often given to the clergy out of fear, reverence and gratitude; (6) the Teutonic custom of commuting retributive penalties for offenses by fines was adopted into the penitential discipline of the church and it brought funds for the poor.

Avarice, greed and superstition, inevitable in that age, were the shadow side of this movement. (2) Charlemagne and the Councils sought to mitigate evils which could not be entirely^a abolished.

(2) The Catholic historian Ratzinger is entirely frank in describing the venality and greed of some of the bishops and others of the clergy, o.c. p. 200.

In the vigorous reforms of Charlemagne, the renowned prince,

the patron of learning and religion, we may discover the marks of the wisest measures of the times.

Sources of poor relief in the times of Charlemagne were:

(1) property which was restored by Charlemagne, if it had been taken away from the Church; or its income was assured; (2) the parish system was enriched by endowments; (3) tithes were assessed and the proceeds were ordered to be paid to the local priest; (4) the traditional oblations in connection with public worship were received; (5) estates were often given to the clergy out of fear, reverence and gratitude; (6) the Teutonic custom of commuting retributive penalties for offenses by fines was adopted into the penitential discipline of the church and it brought funds for the poor.

Avarice, greed and superstition, inevitable in that age, were the shadow side of this movement. (3) Charlemagne and the Councils sought to mitigate evils which could not be entirely abolished.

(2) The Catholic historian Rastinger is entirely frank in describing the venality and greed of some of the bishops and others of the clergy.

Commutation in fines.- The ancient German tribes were accustomed to accept as expiation of personal injuries a money fine, payment to king for breaking the peace, compensation to the injured party, and expiation money (Wechsgeld) to the family of a man slain by accident or in a quarrel. The church could not easily abolish a deeply rooted and respected custom, so the discipline of the clergy utilized it and turned it into a source of revenue, at first for the poor, but later it was abused by some of the clergy and the stream of fines came to themselves. The demand of the clergy was enforced among the Teutonic believers by a refusal to absolve them from sins if they declined to give for the poor.

Church income was subject to a fourfold division, - a tradition from an earlier age: (1) one part was paid to the bishop; (2) a second part went to the support of the inferior clergy; (3) the ecclesiastical must receive a share for repairs; (4) and the poor were to be aided from the same source. This was a general, though not a universal division. Some consideration was given in the smaller and less wealthy rural parishes for the local clergy, their share in the income being relatively larger than in the case of cathedral churches with rich environments.

In the administration of the church poor fund we note: (1) that the bishop, as head of the clergy in his diocese, ruled over all; (2) an archdeacon was made vicar of the bishop in matters of charity, like the oikonomos or aerarius of the previous period; (3) the parish priests reported their accounts to the bishop. A shrewd rule was common which required the parson to divide the tithe received into its four parts in

Communtation in fines. - The ancient German tribes were accustomed to accept as expiation of personal injuries a money fine, payment to king for breaking the peace, compensation to the injured party, and expiation money (Wehsgeld) to the family of a man slain by accident or in a quarrel. The church could not easily abolish a deeply rooted and respected custom, so the discipline of the clergy utilized it and turned it into a source of revenue, at first for the poor, but later it was abused by some of the clergy and the stream of fines came to themselves. The demand of the clergy was enforced among the Teutonic believers by a refusal to absolve them from sins if they declined to give for the poor.

Church income was subject to a fourfold division. - a tradition from an earlier age: (1) one part was paid to the bishop; (2) a second part went to the support of the inferior clergy; (3) the ecclesiastical must receive a share for repairs; (4) and the poor were to be aided from the same source. This was a general, though not a universal division. Some consideration was given in the smaller and less wealthy rural parishes for the local clergy, their share in the income being relatively larger than in the case of cathedral churches with rich environments.

In the administration of the church poor fund we note: (1) that the bishop, as head of the clergy in his diocese, ruled over all; (2) an archdeacon was made vicar of the bishop in matters of charity, like the oikonomos or gerontes of the previous period; (3) the parish priests reported their accounts to the bishop. A shrewd rule was common which required the parson to divide the tithes received into its four parts in

presence of witnesses, a hint to modern church treasurers who would keep their handling of church funds above suspicion. Charlemagne issued orders not only requiring strict accounts from the clergy but also forbidding laymen to appropriate to their own uses goods which belonged to the church or to the poor. The poorer parishes were freed from certain taxes, while the property of the wealthy churches must bear their due share of the public burdens.

As a large part of the working population were reduced to vassalage under the feudal regime, and all dependents must be cared for by their lords, only the free laborers and laborers in church lands were left for relief by church funds. Homeless orphans and foundlings were protected and educated in cloisters; Christian captives taken by the heathens in war were redeemed; strangers received hospitality.

The cooperation of Charlemagne with respect to the clergy was felt in respect to poor relief: (1) he required the landlords to care for their dependents, unfree men who were attached to their estates; (2) he issued orders to punish and repress beggars and vagrants; (3) free laborers in sickness and misery, and laborers on church lands, were to be cared for out of the poor funds of the church; (4) the monasteries were sources of relief and they were growing in importance; (5) hospitals supplemented relief to needy persons and families; (6) the craft guilds were important agencies of mutual help in towns; (7) Charlemagne, if he could have ruled long enough, would have had a free school in every parish.

From all lands, even from England and Ireland, as in all ages from apostolic times, help was sent to the church in Palestine.

(1)

On "Commendation" see Duruy, History of the Middle Ages, p. 151.

apostolic times, help was sent to the church in Palestine.

From all lands, even from England and Ireland, as in all ages from could have ruled long enough, would have had a free school in every parish. were important agencies of mutual help in towns; (7) Charlemagne, if he supplemented relief to needy persons and families; (8) the craft guilds sources of relief and they were growing in importance; (9) hospitals cared for out of the poor funds of the church; (4) the monasteries were ers in sickness and misery, and laborers on church lands, were to be issued orders to punish and repress beggars and vagrants; (3) free labor- their dependents, unfree men who were attached to their estates; (2) he felt in respect to poor relief: (1) he required the landlords to care for The cooperation of Charlemagne with respect to the clergy was

war were redeemed; strangers received hospitality. and educated in cloisters; Christian captives taken by the heathens in relief by church funds. Homeless orphans and foundlings were protected lords, only the free laborers and laborers in church lands were left for age under the feudal regime, and all dependents must be cared for by their As a large part of the working population were reduced to vassal- share of the public burdens. taxes, while the property of the wealthy churches must bear their due to the church or to the poor. The poorer parishes were freed from certain bidding layments appropriate to their own uses goods which belonged orders not only repaying strict accounts from the clergy but also for- their handling of church funds above suspicion. Charlemagne issued presence of witnesses, a hint to modern church treasurers who would keep

The legal enforcement of the payment of a tithe for poor relief under Charlemagne helped to prepare the minds of men for the poor laws which long afterwards grew up in England and Germany; for, although the media of distribution were ecclesiastical and feudal, and not communal, the idea of a tax for the poor levied according to income was inherent in the tithe. In earlier ages the thought of mathematical measurement of the giver of charity and of legal compulsion in collection had been repugnant to the feelings of Christians. Eminent men of the clergy protested against Charlemagne's insistence on an enforced rate for the poor; but there was no other way and his will prevailed.

In the middle of the eighth century Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, made earnest efforts to improve poor relief in his diocese. He made lists of the indigent in the city and neighboring country, and regulated the methods of giving relief. Every fortnight, on a Saturday, the needy persons must assemble in the cathedral to listen to sermons, and twice in each year go to confession. The rule of Chrodegang was extended in Gaul, was improved by the learned deacon of Metz, Amalarius and endorsed by the council of Aix-la-Chapelle(Aachen) (817). According to this arrangement the bishop must live a common life with his subordinate clergy, must care for the poor of his city; and must see that a hospital was maintained in connection with the clerical residence (cloister, claustrum), for the poor and for strangers. Similar regulations were made for the cloisters of women devoted to the religious life. Directly in charge of a hospital must be placed one who "hates avarice and loves hospitality."

Monasteries which had been under the rule of Benedict and acquired property were often plundered by worldly bishops and arrogant laymen. Boniface (742) and Pirruinled the way to imprisonment and Charlemange aided the reforms. With each cloister must be maintained a hospice. Charlemange in 789 issued an order (capitulare) that the rule of Benedict should be followed and that charity should be practiced. The cellar-master (celleharius) must be honest and kind, feed the hungry, aid the sick and Christ must be honored by welcome given to strangers. The monastery must not only relieve the distress of its own dependents who cultivated its lands, but must also provide for others who, sick or hungry, knocked at their door.

Illustrations from shinning examples are the Abbot Adalhard (822) of the cloister of Corvie.

In the middle of the eighth century Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, made earnest efforts to improve poor relief in his diocese. He made lists of the indigent in the city and neighboring country, and regulated the methods of giving relief. Every fortnight, on a Saturday, the needy persons must assemble in the cathedral to listen to sermons, and twice in each year go to confession. The rule of Chrodegang was extended in Gaul, was improved by the learned deacon of Metz, Amalarius and endorsed by the council of Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) (817). According to this arrangement the bishop must live a common life with his subordinate clergy, must care for the poor of his city; and must see that a hospital was maintained in connection with the clerical residence (cloister, claustrum), for the poor and for strangers. Similar regulations were made for the cloisters of women devoted to the religious life. Directly in charge of a hospital must be placed one who "hates avarice and loves hospitality."

Monasteries which had been under the rule of Benedict and acquired property were often plundered by worldly bishops and arrogant laymen. Boniface (752) and Pippin limited the way to imprisonment and Charlemagne aided the reforms. With each cloister must be maintained a hospice. Charlemagne in 789 issued an order (capitulaire) that the rule of Benedict should be followed and that charity should be practiced. The cellar-master (cellerarius) must be honest and kind, feed the hungry, aid the sick and Christ must be honored by welcome given to strangers. The monastery must not only relieve the distress of its own dependents who cultivated its lands, but must also provide for others who, sick or hungry, knocked at their door.

Illustrations from shining examples are the Abbot Adalard (823) of the cloister of Corbie.

Ratzinger sings the praise of the monks and their contribution to piety, learning and charity. o. c. p. 216-218.

See Dante's praise of St. Dominic, Par. XII, 103-106.

The work of the clergy for the improvement of the condition of the poor.- Preventive and constructive philanthropy is not a modern innovation. The wisest men of all ages have seen the value of provident methods to anticipate ruin.

The clergy of the early Middle Ages led in the organization of society; they constituted the one universal brotherhood among the petty warring tribes and peoples of Europe. (1) They sought to bring princes under the sway of Christian motives of justice and benevolence and they partly succeeded. (2) Slavery was brought to an end under Charlemagne; serfs were protected against caprice and oppression by law and discipline; the serfs on Church lands were more kindly treated than others. (3) The monks set an example of industry and they taught useful arts and crafts which improved the taste and productive efficiency of laborers. A war-like people, descendants of nomadic wanderers, had not learned to like regular manual labor and it was difficult to acquire the habit; (4) The guilds were organized on religious principles, were influenced by the clergy, and became important economic aids in times of trial; they represented the mutual benefit associations of the age.

Under the ancient Roman Empire the church members could help the poor only by personal relief ^{by gifts} which mitigated suffering; while after the conversion of the northern tribes the clergy became influential in legislation, in administration of government and in the development of judicial interpretation of law. The superior learning of many ecclesiastics and their control of the religious belief and fears of princes and people opened up an opportunity for a kind of social policy which they often used for the permanent improvement of the lot of the poor.

Under the ancient Roman Empire the church members could help
the poor only by personal relief ^{by gifts} which mitigated suffering; while
after the conversion of the northern tribes the clergy became influen-
tial in legislation, in administration of government and in the devel-
opment of judicial interpretation of law. The superior learning of
many ecclesiastics and their control of the religious belief and fears
of princes and people opened up an opportunity for a kind of social policy
which they often used for the permanent improvement of the lot of the poor.

The doctrines and principles of Church leaders and theologians of the times of Charlemagne: (1) Alcuin, Beda, Haims of Halburbalt. See Port-Nicene Fathers- See Ashley.

(1) Ratzinger, o. c. p. 233. The citations are largely repetitions of New Testament ideas and teachings of earlier fathers.

Chapter II.

Poor Relief in the Second Period of the Middle Ages (843-1096 A.D)

Section 1. The economic and political conditions of the period and the problems of philanthropy set by social needs.

After Charlemagne, the central, royal, unifying government was dissolved and the empire was divided. (817). For centuries there was a struggle between local lords seeking to maintain their own dignity and power and the historic tendency to build up nations, represented by kings. Frequently these militant lords were rude in manners, barbarians in blood and feeling, disdainful of culture, without the discipline of a strong monarchy and arbitrary in the administration of justice.

The period of the 10th century was especially dark; in the latter part of the 12th century a light dawned.

Sec. 2. Church Regulation of Charity.

From the decline of the central government after Charlemagne and the economic and political changes just noted the church ceased to promulgate general regulations of relief. Each country followed a somewhat different course of development.

The clergy themselves yielded to the rude and cruel spirit of the age where every strong man was a law unto himself. Bishops and monks often became oppressive to their serfs, as military lords themselves. But there were noble men of religion ready to protest against greed and cruelty, and in the issue not without result.

Poor Relief in the Second Period of the Middle Ages (843-1000 A.D.)

Section I. The economic and political conditions of the period and the

problems of philanthropy set by social needs.

After Charlemagne, the central, royal, uniting government was

dissolved and the empire was divided. (817). For centuries there was a

struggle between local lords seeking to maintain their own dignity and

power and the historic tendency to build up nations, represented by kings.

Frequently these militant lords were rude in manners, barbarians in blood

and feeling, disdainful of culture, without the discipline of a strong

monarchy and arbitrary in the administration of justice.

The period of the 10th century was especially dark; in the latter

part of the 12th century a light dawned.

Church Regulation of Charity.

Sec. 2.

From the decline of the central government after Charlemagne and

the economic and political changes just noted the church ceased to pro-

mulate general regulations of relief. Each country followed a somewhat

different course of development.

The clergy themselves yielded to the rude and cruel spirit of the

age where every strong man was a law unto himself. Bishops and monks

often became oppressive to their serfs, as military lords themselves. But

there were noble men of religion ready to protest against greed and cruel-

ty, and in the issue not without result.

Parochial and diocesan forms of relief were much affected by the economic and political conditions. The funds which Charlemagne had endeavored to protect were often appropriated by the feudal lords. The clergy over large areas were poor, ignorant and despised. Multitudes of the laboring population were in a condition of serfdom. The free laborer became a serf, and as only free laborers were left for church poor relief its scope was greatly restricted and its organization enfeebled.

Under these conditions many of the monasteries, sheltered and fortified within strong walls, and respected by the people, preserved the best traditions of the arts, of culture and of charity. The rural population, many of them dependents on monastic estates, supplied the cellars and granaries of the recluses, trusted in their prayers of the consecrated men, and furnished goods for them to distribute to the poor.

Parochial and Diocesan forms of relief were much affected by the economic and political conditions. The funds which Charlemagne had endeavored to protect were often appropriated by the feudal lords. The clergy over large areas were poor, ignorant and despised. Multitudes of the laboring population were in a condition of serfdom. The free laborer became a serf, and as only free laborers were left for church poor relief its scope was greatly restricted and its organization enfeebled.

Under these conditions many of the monasteries sheltered and fortified within strong walls, and respected by the people, preserved the best traditions of the arts, of culture and of charity. The rural population, many of them dependents on monastic estates, supplied the cells and granaries of the recluses, trusted in their prayers of the consecrated men, and furnished goods for them to distribute to the poor.

This period is also marked by the rise of orders, with a wide range of beneficent activity, of which more will be said as we proceed.

This period is also marked by the rise of orders, with a wide
range of beneficent activity, of which more will be said as we proceed.

Cities and towns toward the close of this period undertook the care of poor persons. The burgher spirit was growing; merchants and craftsmen in Germany increased in wealth and wished to make themselves felt in local government. They endowed hospitals, built churches, employed devoted persons of the religious life to care for the feeble, aged and sick in their institutions of charity.

France. In the general disorders which followed the death of Charlemagne (814), and the failure and death of his weak but pious son Louis le Dibunain (814-840), the ecclesiastical possessions and income were largely confiscated and wasted and the poor left without resources. The corruption invaded the life of priests and bishops. Councils and synods exhorted the disciples of Christ to repent and restore; but the feudal lords feared neither kings nor priestly excommunication.

Hincruar of Rheims is a type of the ecclesiastic who kept alive the ancient spirit of the faith. He made appeal to the rules of Charlemagne's time. (1)

(1) Ratzinger mentions (p. 240) Herman of Nevers and Rhaolf of Soissons.

In the midst of misrule the abbey of Cluny was established by the Benedictine monks at the beginning of the 10th century (910), and its rise was marked by an awakening of sincere piety and mercy in (1) monasteries.

In the same period Gerhard wrought in Belgium to purify the cloister life and relieve distress. But the evil was too deep to be speedily healed; the tithe, not without some protest, was lost to the parish, and charity was again compelled to depend upon the fluctuating and uncertain gifts which might be evoked by religious hope and fear.

(1) The first Abbot, St. Odo, is distinguished.

France. In the general disorders which followed the death of Charlemagne (814), and the failure and death of his weak but pious son Louis le Pieux (814-840), the ecclesiastical possessions and income were largely confiscated and wasted and the poor left without resources. The corruption invaded the life of priests and bishops. Councils and synods exhorted the disciples of Christ to repent and restore; but the feudal lords feared neither kings nor priestly excommunication. Hincmar of Rheims is a type of the ecclesiastic who kept alive the ancient spirit of the faith. He made appeal to the rules of Charlemagne's time. (1)

(1) Ratzinger mentions (p. 240) Herman of Nevers and Rollo of Soissons.

In the midst of misrule the abbey of Cluny was established by the Benedictine monks at the beginning of the 10th century (910), and its rise was marked by an awakening of sincere piety and mercy in (1) monasteries.

In the same period Gerard wrought in Belgium to purify the cloister life and relieve distress. But the evil was too deep to be speedily healed; the tithe, not without some protest, was lost to the parish, and charity was again compelled to depend upon the fluctuating and uncertain gifts which might be evoked by religious hope and fear.

(1) The first Abbot, St. Odor, is distinguished.

BOND

France.- In France the endowments of hospitals and other charities were given more by the lords, while in Germany more often by cities and prosperous burghers.

CONSTRUCTION

BOND

France.- In France the endowments of hospitals and other charities
were given more by the lords, while in Germany more often by cities and
prosperous burghers.

Germany.- Germany had its own peculiar development. Poor relief was never systematically organized there until Charlemagne, of whose system we have already spoken. During the ninth century the regulations of Charlemagne were generally known and the ecclesiastical authorities cooperated in enforcing the tithe and securing a fourth part of the income to the poor. While abuses abounded it would appear that conditions did not become so hopelessly bad as in France, and the bishops, save where rich and powerful, often set an example of liberal and somewhat systematic charity.

Henry III, king of Germany, died in 1056, and after his death the royal control of the nobility was too weak to keep them in order. The bishops and archbishops in Germany had long since come to be rulers of estates and serfs, and to their credit be it said many of them had upheld discipline of the clergy, giving liberally to the poor, and held the parish priests to the task of dividing their incomes with those who were in need. But the seeds of decay were in this wealth and political power; the episcopal palace sometime became the abode of luxury and set an evil example.

The holy Bernard, type of the best church dignitary, organizer of good works, inspirer of piety and morality, represented the ancient spirit of benevolence; and he was not entirely alone. The history of the German Church before the end of the 11th century is illustrious with splendid names and deeds.

Germany. - Germany had its own peculiar development. Poor

relief was never systematically organized there until Charlemagne, of whose system we have already spoken. During the ninth century the regulations of Charlemagne were generally known and the ecclesiastical authorities cooperated in enforcing the tithe and securing a fourth part of the income to the poor. While abuses abounded it would appear that conditions did not become so hopelessly bad as in France, and the bishops, save where rich and powerful, often set an example of liberal and some - what systematic charity.

Henry III, king of Germany, died in 1056, and after his death the royal control of the nobility was too weak to keep them in order. The bishops and archbishops in Germany had long since come to be rulers of estates and serfs, and to their credit be it said many of them had upheld discipline of the clergy, giving liberally to the poor, and held the parishes priests to the task of dividing their incomes with those who were in need. But the seeds of decay were in this wealth and political power; the episcopal palace sometime became the abode of luxury and set an evil example. The holy Bernard, type of the best church dignitary, organizer of good works, inspirer of piety and morality, represented the ancient spirit of benevolence; and he was not entirely alone. The history of the German Church before the end of the 11th century is illustrated with splendid names and deeds.

When a tree has decayed within it easily falls before a storm which would not have crushed its trunk if this had remained sound to the center. The storm which broke on the Church from a turbulent, only partly civilized nobility, after the royal head grew too feeble to restrain it, found the clergy too weak in themselves, too yielding to threat and bribe, to stand erect. After the closing years of the 11th century parish relief in Germany was demoralized. Hospitals were founded; many monasteries were agencies of relief; but the parish clergy and bishops no longer administered the fund of benevolence as their predecessors had done and as the regulations of Charlemagne intended should be perpetual.

When a tree has decayed within it easily falls before a storm which would not have crushed its trunk if this had remained sound to the center. The storm which broke on the Church from a turbulent, only partly civilized nobility, after the royal head grew too feeble to restrain it, found the clergy too weak in themselves, too yielding to threat and bribe, to stand erect. After the closing years of the fifteenth century parish relief in Germany was demoralized. Hospitals were founded; many monasteries were agencies of relief; but the parish clergy and bishops no longer administered the fund of benevolence as their predecessors had done and as the regulations of Charlemagne intended should be perpetual.

England.- In England monasteries obtained wealth and influence. Hospitals were founded,- from the seventh century onward. Feudal lords were expected to care for their feeble and needy serfs and dependents. Slavery was mitigated by clerical influence, through preaching and discipline, but it had a stubborn hold.

The same forces which were at work in Germany deeply affected England. It is not probable, though information is unsatisfactory, that the parish system was well developed in England. (1)

(1) See Ashley, Eng. Ecn. History, II....., when he criticized Rabzins' view that England did enjoy a thoroughly administered and effective parochial system of relief.

England. - In England monasteries obtained wealth and influence.

Hospitals were founded, - from the seventh century onward. Feudal lords

were expected to care for their feeble and needy serfs and dependents.

Slavery was mitigated by clerical influence, through preaching and disci-

pline, but it had a stubborn hold.

The same forces which were at work in Germany deeply affected

England. It is not probable, though information is unsatisfactory, that

the parish system was well developed in England. (1)

(1) See Ashley, Eng. Econ. History, II....., when he criticised Rabbin-

gists view that England did enjoy a thoroughly administered and effective

parochial system of relief.

The regulations of Charlemagne were applied during the 10th and 11th centuries in England by ecclesiastics of authority who were in close touch with France and had lived there. The tithes were divided into three parts,- one for the repair of church buildings, one for the priests, one for the poor. This seems to have been the earlier rule in France, but it gradually yielded place to the four-fold division. Hospitals were formed, and the clergy were required to provide entertainment for strangers.

The rich estates and incomes which were given by nobles, kings and peasants to the clergy were sometimes a cause of degradation of morals; but this was met by the vigorous measure of upright men, like Archbishop Dunstan of Coolterbury (960-980).

The regulations of Charlemagne were applied during the 10th and 11th centuries in England by ecclesiastics of authority who were in close touch with France and had lived there. The tithes were divided into three parts, - one for the repair of church buildings, one for the priests, one for the poor. This seems to have been the earlier rule in France, but it gradually yielded place to the four-fold division. Hospitals were formed, and the clergy were required to provide entertainment for strangers.

The rich estates and incomes which were given by nobles, kings and peasants to the clergy were sometimes a cause of degradation of morals; but this was met by the vigorous measures of upright men, like Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury (960-988).

Italy.

After Gregory, the Great, there was a decline. The Lombard invasion induced social paralysis of fear and uncertainty. Charity was greatly decentralized and country parishes were organized. Under Charlemagne the tithe had been introduced by law, the landlords required to care for their dependents, and hospitals were placed under the protecting shield of law. After Charlemagne there was a decline; feudal oppression succeeded; the clergy were depressed and corrupted, the poor were neglected; parish relief diminished, being deprived of funds and administrators; institutions were founded and monasteries became important factors in relief. The need of the age was a revival of sincerity of faith, purity of life, beneficence of action; and the very depravity of the clergy and nobility seemed to excite alarm and disgust. At least a partial reformation was demanded and leaders of nobler type were found for the occasion.

Italy.

After Gregory, the Great, there was a decline. The Lombard invasion induced social paralysis of fear and uncertainty. Charity was greatly decentralized and country parishes were organized. Under Charlemagne the tithes had been introduced by law, the landlords required to care for their dependents, and hospitals were placed under the protecting shield of law. After Charlemagne there was a decline; feudal oppression succeeded; the clergy were depressed and corrupted, the poor were neglected; parish relief diminished, being deprived of funds and administrators; institutions were founded and monasteries became important factors in relief. The need of the age was a revival of sincerity of faith, purity of life, beneficence of action; and the very depravity of the clergy and nobility seemed to excite alarm and disgust. At least a partial reformation was demanded and leaders of nobler type were found for the occasion.

Chapter III. Third Period (1096-1270) of Middle Ages.

About the beginning of the 12th Century church parish relief had quite generally ceased in many parts of continental Europe, even when it had gained a certain importance. The monasteries, hospitals and orders had come to be the chief agencies of relief. The causes of this situation have already been mentioned, as they arose in a previous period: (1) the obligation of the landlord to care for his own vassals; (2) the lords and worldly bishops appropriated to themselves the tithes, the material source of parish relief; (3) the "secular" clergy often became ignorant, worldly and inefficient, while the comparative purity and devotion of the monks gained popular confidence; (4) there was a common belief that the monks themselves, as "poor" ("pauperes Christi"), were entitled to the alms due to the poor from all the faithful.¹

1. Citation of Pseudo-Isidorian Decretal, of Pope Urban, in Ratzinger, o.c., p. 282. note.

Many preferred to give charity to and by means of the monasteries because they were thought to be less worldly and selfish than the parish clergy. "For centuries the cloisters were the central points of all religious, charitable and educational activity" (Ratzinger o.c. p. 288).

During the 12th Century there were many indications of a finer and more humane spirit. The ancient literature begins to have wider influence. Noble and beautiful cathedrals, glorious in majesty and charming in decorations, rose in Western Europe, perhaps sometimes at the cost of the poor fund. The works of charity were now touched with a larger intelligence.

Chapter III. Third Period (1096-1270) of Middle Ages.

About the beginning of the 13th Century church parish relief had quite generally ceased in many parts of continental Europe, even when it had gained a certain importance. The monasteries, hospitals and orders had come to be the chief agencies of relief. The causes of this situation have already been mentioned, as they arose in a previous period: (1) the obligation of the landlord to care for his own vassals; (2) the lords and worldly bishops appropriated to themselves the tithes, the material source of parish relief; (3) the "secular" clergy often became ignorant, worldly and inefficient, while the comparative purity and devotion of the monks gained popular confidence; (4) there was a common belief that the monks themselves, as "poor" ("pauperes Christi"), were entitled to the alms due to the poor from all the faithful.¹

¹ Citation of Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, of Pope Urban, in Ratzinger, o.c., p. 282. note.

Many preferred to give charity to and by means of the monasteries because they were thought to be less worldly and selfish than the parish clergy. "For centuries the cloisters were the central points of all religious, charitable and educational activity" (Ratzinger o.c. p. 288).

During the 13th Century there were many indications of a finer and more humane spirit. The ancient literature begins to have wider influence. Noble and beautiful cathedrals, glorious in majesty and charming in decorations, rose in Western Europe, perhaps sometimes at the cost of the poor fund. The works of charity were now touched with a larger intelligence.

Here and there are found foretokenings of more rational methods, even of the duty to train and educate the children of the poor to find their way and earn their living by improved education. The Church recognized this social duty officially, though its plans were inadequate and its administration imperfect.

Here and there are found foretellings of more rational methods,

even of the duty to train and educate the children of the poor to

find their way and earn their living by improved education. The

Church recognized this social duty officially, though its plans

were inadequate and its administration imperfect.

Education: Free Schools.

It was in 1179 that the third Lateran Council promulgated the following decree:- "The Church of God, being obliged like a good and tender mother to provide for the bodily and spiritual wants of the poor, desirous to procure for poor children the opportunity for learning to read, and for making advancement in study, orders that each cathedral shall have a teacher charged with the gratuitous instruction of the clergy of that church, and also of the indigent scholars, and that he be assigned a benefice, which, sufficient for his subsistence, may thus open the door of the school to the studious youth. A tutor shall be installed in the other churches and in the monasteries where formerly there were funds set apart for this purpose." ¹

1. Compayn History of Pedagogy, p. 69.

Education: Free Schools.

It was in 1179 that the third Lateran Council promulgated the following decree:- "The Church of God, being obliged like a good and tender mother to provide for the bodily and spiritual wants of the poor, desires to procure for poor children the opportunity for learning to read, and for making advancement in study, orders that each cathedral shall have a teacher charged with the gratuitous instruction of the clergy of that church, and also of the indigent scholars, and that he be assigned a benefice, which, sufficient for his subsistence, may thus open the door of the school to the studious youth. A tutor shall be installed in the other churches and in the monasteries where formerly there were funds set apart for this purpose." I

Chapter IV. Fourth Period of Mediaeval Charity
(1270 -1517), to the Reformation.

Section 1. Social Conditions which set the problems
of philanthropy.

The emancipation of serfs had a darkside, for the freedmen lost their homes when they gained personal independence; the landlord was under no obligation to a free citizen. The guilds frequently became selfish and narrow and excluded young men from entering trades. Trade and manufacture were no longer for the production of commodities in restricted circles of household and neighborhood, and the makers of wares no longer knew every need of their market.

Hence beggary increased and became a veritable plague; and it was further encouraged by popular conceptions favorable to indiscriminate alms-giving. The wars broke up families and turned loose swarms of men unaccustomed to regular industry.

Chapter IV. Fourth Period of Medieval Charity

(1270-1517), to the Reformation.

Section I. Social Conditions which set the problems of philanthropy.

The emancipation of serfs had a darkside, for the freedmen lost their homes when they gained personal independence; the land-lord was under no obligation to a free citizen. The guilds frequently became selfish and narrow and excluded young men from entering trades. Trade and manufacture were no longer for the production of commodities in restricted circles of household and neighborhood, and the makers of wares no longer knew every need of their market. Hence beggary increased and became a veritable plague; and it was further encouraged by popular conceptions favorable to indiscriminate alms-giving. The wars broke up families and turned loose swarms of men unaccustomed to regular industry.

The corporate life of cities was still further developed. The
Hauseatic cities along the coast of northern waters, and commercial
centers in Italy, France and England became more opulent. The lay-
man was asserting himself and a break with ecclesiastical domination
was imminent.

The corporate life of cities was still further developed. The
Hanseatic cities along the coast of northern waters, and commercial
centers in Italy, France and England became more opulent. The lay-
man was asserting himself and a break with ecclesiastical domination
was imminent.

Section 2. The administration of relief.

Parish relief was never entirely suspended in any Christian Country, but in this period it had become a subordinate factor. Offerings for the poor were always taken at the church door.

Section 2. The administration of relief.

Parish relief was never entirely suspended in any Christian Country, but in this period it had become a subordinate factor. Offerings for the poor were always taken at the church door.

With the eleventh century parish relief practically disappears from the ecclesiastical legislation and administration, though the necessity for Charity did not fail to evoke deeds and gifts of kindness. But the form of administration must always change to correspond to the new social conditions.

The chief agencies of charity now became the monasteries, the hospital orders and associations of laymen, the philanthropic organizations of cities and the mutual benefit features of the guilds of craftsmen. These then are the institutions which call for present attention until we approach the Reformation, when the parish principle was again recognized in a new way, after long trial proved that there is no complete substitute in any other method.

The monasteries were still popular and were trusted to collect and distribute alms. Their estates were productive. They improved the arts and crafts of their neighbors. When their lands were tilled by serfs the condition of these dependents was made tolerable. The monks themselves, in their best days, taught the duty and dignity of labor by their own example.

But there was a dark side,- idleness, luxury, vice. Perhaps this became more somber; perhaps the conscience of the people became more sensitive; certain it is that near the Reformation the Germanic people determined to put an end to these institutions and did so, often in a very rough way. When the fraternities of monks and the corporations and orders came to treat funds entrusted to them for the poor as possessions for their own advantage and enjoyment the social sense of justice was offended.

With the eleventh century parish relief practically disappears from the ecclesiastical legislation and administration, though the necessity for charity did not fail to evoke deeds and gifts of kindness.

But the form of administration must always change to correspond

to the new social conditions.

The chief agencies of charity now became the monasteries, the

hospital orders and associations of laymen, the philanthropic organizations of cities and the mutual benefit features of the guilds of craftsmen. These then are the institutions which call for present attention until we approach the Reformation, when the parish principle was again recognized in a new way, after long trial proved that there is no complete substitute in any other method.

The monasteries were still popular and were trusted to collect and distribute alms. Their estates were productive. They improved the arts and crafts of their neighbors. When their lands were filled by serfs the condition of these dependents was made tolerable. The monks themselves, in their best days, taught the duty and dignity of labor by their own example.

But there was a dark side, - idleness, luxury, vice. Perhaps this became more somber; perhaps the conscience of the people became more sensitive; certain it is that near the Reformation the Germanic people determined to put an end to these institutions and did so, often in a very rough way. When the fratercities of monks and the corporations and orders came to treat funds entrusted to them for the poor as possessions for their own advantage and enjoyment the social sense of justice was offended.

Hospitals, as asylums for the poor, were with each succeeding age, more fully specialized. This was made possible by increase in population and resources, and was furthered by more intimate knowledge of the varying needs of different classes of indigent persons, the sick, the aged, the children, the wanderer. Many city hospitals were founded between 1250 and 1350. In the 14th and 15th centuries in Germany the hospitals gradually came under town control; in France the clergy administered them.

Hospitals, as asylums for the poor, were with each succeeding age, more fully specialized. This was made possible by increase in population and resources, and was furthered by more intimate knowledge of the varying needs of different classes of indigent persons, the sick, the aged, the children, the wanderer. Many city hospitals were founded between 1250 and 1350. In the 14th and 15th centuries in Germany the hospitals gradually came under town control; in France the clergy administered them.

The orders became more significant. Their members were at first chiefly of aristocratic rank, but later they became more democratic and lower classes of society were represented. The hospital orders were associations of citizens, bound by vows to care for the sick, to relieve distress, to build bridges and roads, to defend the weak. Almost every social need was met by these orders in their palmy days. They helped to bridge over the chasm between earlier clerical administration and the later lay charity of modern times. When the cities and guilds founded hospitals they frequently gave their administration into the charge of monastic and hospital orders.

orders.

their administration into the charge of monastic and hospital

When the cities and guilds founded hospitals they frequently gave

clerical administration and the later lay charity of modern times.

pejorative days. They helped to bridge over the chasm between earlier

the week. Almost every social need was met by these orders in their

sick, to relieve distress, to build bridges and roads, to defend

orders were associations of citizens, bound by vows to care for the

ocratic and lower classes of society were represented. The hospital

first chiefly of aristocratic rank, but later they became more dem-

The orders became more significant. Their members were at

To the monastic orders fell~~xx~~ the duties which had once belonged to the parish, the diocese and their clergy. The orders which were most popular in this period were the Benedictines, the Cistercians, Premonstrants, Dominicans and Franciscans.

The Benedictines had been established in the sixth century by St. Benedict. The Council of Aix in 816 had ruled that the monastery should give to the poor a tenth of its income and this order of monks respected the rule and met the needs of the suffering in various ways. A porter (portarius) was appointed to distribute alms. Gifts might be in money, food or clothing, and they varied with the needs of the poor and the resources of the cloister. Alms were sent to the homes of the sick and feeble. Hospices for the entertainment of travellers were connected with the house and placed in charge of brothers. In desert places and by dangerous mountain passes refuges were maintained, some of which still exercise hospitality. Poor houses for invalid poor were also supported. In the Middle Ages the monks led in all kinds of learning, and possessed much skill in medicine; and thus they naturally developed hospital service. Nuns were especially devoted to this task; though the activity of nuns as nurses of the sick was much restricted as compared with our time.

To the monastic orders fell the duties which had once belonged to the parish, the diocese and their clergy. The orders which were most popular in this period were the Benedictines, the Clisterians, Premontstrants, Dominicans and Franciscans. The Benedictines had been established in the sixth century by St. Benedict. The Council of Aix in 816 had ruled that the monastery should give to the poor a tenth of its income and this order of monks respected the rule and met the needs of the suffering in various ways. A portier (portarius) was appointed to distribute alms. Gifts might be in money, food or clothing, and they varied with the needs of the poor and the resources of the cloister. Alms were sent to the homes of the sick and feeble. Hospices for the entertainment of travellers were connected with the house and placed in charge of brothers. In desert places and by dangerous mountain passes refugees were maintained, some of which still exercise hospitality. Poor houses for invalid poor were also supported. In the Middle Ages the monks led in all kinds of learning, and possessed much skill in medicine; and thus they naturally developed hospital service. Nuns were especially devoted to this task; though the activity of nuns as nurses of the sick was much restricted as compared with our time.

The large number and wide diffusion of monasteries in some measure made up for the loss of a community system of relief. The cellars, stores, riches, ornaments and income of the monasteries were in times of general distress, caused by floods or drouth, a source of help. Confidence in the honesty and goodness of the monks brought to them large gifts, and this, unfortunately, was a temptation to idleness, luxury and vice which at last brought their Nemesis. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries these abuses seem to have become most flagrant.¹

1. Ratzinger, p. 311.

The large number and wide diffusion of monasteries in some measure made up for the loss of a community system of relief. The cellars, stores, riches, ornaments and income of the monasteries were in times of general distress, caused by floods or drought, a source of help. Confidence in the honesty and goodness of the monks brought to them large gifts, and this, unfortunately, was a temptation to idleness, luxury and vice which at last brought their Meneia. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries these abuses seem to have become most flagrant.¹

¹ I. Hatzinger, p. 311.

The Cistercians and Premonstrants in the twelfth century gave a new impulse to the monastic life. Their administration was similar to that of the Benedictines.

The Clisterians and Premonstrants in the twelfth century gave
a new impulse to the monastic life. Their administration was similar
to that of the Benedictines.

The begging friars influenced the course of charity in many ways for good and for evil. St. Francis, of Assisi, ⁽¹¹⁸²⁻¹²²⁶⁾ founded the order of Franciscans in the twelfth century. St. Dominic (1170-1221) founded the Dominicans in the same period. New movements inject fresh blood into society when established institutions have grown rich, proud, ambitious, formal and forgetful of their principles. The older orders had made much of industry and productive occupations; but the begging friars abandoned this programme and lived on alms. This was due partly to the specialization of industry, but, perhaps, most to an over-emphasis on the merit of the contemplative religious life.

contemplative religious life.
try, but, perhaps, most to an over-emphasis on the merit of the
lived on alms. This was due partly to the specialization of indus-
occupations; but the begging friars abandoned this programme and
ples. The older orders had made much of industry and productive
grown rich, proud, ambitious, formal and forgetful of their princ-
fect fresh blood into society when established institutions have
1221) founded the Dominicans in the same period. New movements in-
order of Franciscans in the twelfth century. St. Dominic(1170-
ways for good and for evil. St. Francis, of Assisi, founded the
(1188-1226)
The begging friars influenced the course of charity in many

We read in the sources marvelous stories of monastic liberality; how they sold their herds and jewels, and even sacred vestments, to supply the needs of the hungry; how hundreds and even thousands were fed at certain times; how many monks labored in the fields to set an example of industry and produce a surplus for the poor. But of statistics in any proper sense we have practically none. We do not know how many suffered in neglect; how much of the gifts of the faithful were squandered in riotous living and self-indulgence. Without a system of inspection, responsibility and reports abuses were inevitable, and failure a matter of course.

That poverty should continue so general, and that so many people needed charity, is a fact which is common to all the ages thus far, and we moderns have little to boast of. At the same time, perhaps, we have at last come to see that almsgiving is at its best a poor substitute for larger and more radical measures of social legislation, education and cooperation.

tion, education and cooperation.
substitute for larger and more radical measures of social legisla-
we have at last come to see that almsgiving is at its best a poor
and we moderns have little to boast of. At the same time, perhaps,
needed charity, is a fact which is common to all the ages thus far,
That poverty should continue so general, and that so many people
were inevitable, and failure a matter of course.
Without a system of inspection, responsibility and reports abuses
faithful were endangered in riotous living and self-indulgence.
know how many suffered in neglect; how much of the gifts of the
statistics in any proper sense we have practically none. We do not
example of industry and produce a surplus for the poor. But of
fed at certain times; how many monks labored in the fields to get an
supply the needs of the hungry; how hundreds and even thousands were
how they sold their herds and jewels, and even sacred vestments, to
We read in the sources marvelous stories of monastic liberality;

Hospitals.

While the institutions of charity were gradually specialized, the word hospital even in the late Middle Age stood for a variety of modes of relief,- not only nursing the sick but sheltering the aged, furnishing a refuge for unmarried mothers and abandoned foundlings, centers of aid for prisoners, hospices for travellers, and agents for supplying food to indigent families, as well as homes of devout prayer for the world weary.

The sources of their income were varied: gifts and legacies from rich penitents in return for masses or for monuments and honors; the products of fines from courts; and the products of flock, field and forests, of cities noble men and wealthy burgers.

A "conservator" was charged with caring for the legal rights of the institution. A clergyman made the hospital the center of religious influence and the house had its Chapel and altar, as well as its cemetery.

The hospitals had their own physicians and druggists. In municipal hospitals the city doctor served.¹

1. Ratzinger, in a note p. 317, gives the oath of the pharmacist which makes one think of our recent Drug Law: the druggist must swear to live and die in the Christian faith, to serve the doctor in all respect and honor, to give out medicines to all who needed them without partiality, and never to keep on hand any antiquated or spoiled drugs.

Hospitals.

While the institutions of charity were gradually specialized, the word hospital even in the late Middle Ages stood for a variety of modes of relief, - not only nursing the sick but sheltering the aged, furnishing a refuge for unmarried mothers and abandoned foundlings, centers of aid for prisoners, hospices for travellers, and agents for supplying food to indigent families, as well as homes of devout prayer for the world weary.

The sources of their income were varied: gifts and legacies from rich penitents in return for masses or for monuments and honors; the products of fines from courts; and the products of flock, field and forest, of cities noble men and wealthy burghers. A "conservator" was charged with caring for the legal rights of the institution. A clergyman made the hospital the center of religious influence and the house had its Chapel and altar, as well as its cemetery.

The hospitals had their own physicians and druggists. In municipal hospitals the city doctor served.¹

1. Ratnager, in a note p. 317, gives the oath of the pharmacist which makes one think of our recent Drug Law: the druggist must swear to live and die in the Christian faith, to serve the doctor in all respect and honor, to give out medicines to all who needed them without partiality, and never to keep on hand any antipathed or spoiled drugs.