

THE STRUCTURE OF ASPIRATIONS

one region, in the extreme south and lying along the Sussex border, was as much as ten miles from the nearest almshouse.<sup>1</sup> The deeds of gift of most of the smaller establishments necessarily limited reception to almspeople from only one parish, but, as we have observed, many of the larger institutions were open to deserving and unfortunate men and women from the whole of the county or, more commonly, from a considerable group of parishes lying about the almshouse. The benefactors of Kent had learned to take a broad view of their responsibilities and they had mustered formidable resources in the struggle which men had for so long and so desperately waged against privation and hopeless want.

*B. Social rehabilitation.*

The concern of Kentish donors with the plight of the poor was on the whole conservative, having been confined principally to provision for their relief in their own homes and in the numerous almshouses built and endowed during the course of our long period. No strong or systematic attempt was made to experiment with the several forms of social rehabilitation which, as we have observed in certain other counties, seemed to appeal to the burgher mind in those urban communities in which there were strong and well-articulated merchant groups.<sup>2</sup> None the less, the considerable total of £12,043 4s. was provided for these most interesting undertakings, representing not quite 5 per cent. (4·78 per cent.) of the whole of the charitable benefactions of the county. As we might expect, relatively little interest in these schemes is manifest during the early decades, but in the Elizabethan period a total of £3,938 13s., amounting to 8·72 per cent. of all charities for the interval, was provided for these purposes. Though a somewhat larger total of £4,681 2s. was given for these same uses in the early Stuart years, the proportionate strength of interest in plans for social rehabilitation declined markedly, since this sum represented slightly less than 5 per cent. of the whole. During our closing interval, the generous sum of £3,051 was provided for one or another of the plans for social rehabilitation, amounting to the substantial proportion of 11·58 per cent. of all charitable benefactions given during these unsettled years.

Certain kinds of social rehabilitation in which donors from many parts of England were beginning to take an interest were only casually and thinly supported in Kent. Thus the total provided for the relief

<sup>1</sup> This particular region lay close to the Earl of Dorset's great foundation in East Grinstead, Sussex. This foundation we have not counted as of Kent, though Dorset's principal seat was at Knole and much of his property lay thereabouts. It was endowed, after some litigation, with the very large stipend of £215 12s. 9d. p.a. (*S.P.Dom.*, 1631, CXC, 50, CXCVI, 24).

<sup>2</sup> The proportion of all charitable wealth devoted to social rehabilitation ranges from 2·66 per cent. for Somerset to 13·32 per cent. for London.

of prisoners or the redemption of debtors amounted to no more than £610 7s. during the entire course of our period, or 0·24 per cent. of the whole of Kentish charitable funds. This total, comprised of a large number of small gifts, included only £376 10s. of capital, which was, of course, yielding no more than a modest income at the close of our period. Nor was there any considerable or sustained interest in providing dowries or marriage portions for young women in Kent, a form of social rehabilitation which appealed particularly to the gentry in so many other counties. In all, £746 18s. was given for this purpose, representing no more than 0·30 per cent. of the charities in the county. Rather more than half the entire sum was the gift of Thomas Iddenden, a gentleman of Hawkhurst, who in 1566 left land and other properties valued at £410 to the churchwardens of Hawkhurst and Frittenden to support marriage portions, as well as lands of an estimated value of £500 for the general charitable uses of these communities.<sup>1</sup>

A considerably larger sum, amounting to £1,994 1s., or 0·79 per cent. of the total of the county's charities, was given in our period for the relief of the sick or the support of hospitals. These gifts were with few exceptions small in amount, the largest of them being for the great hospitals constituted and endowed in London and Southwark during the course of the sixteenth century.

It is surprising, considering the importance of Kentish industry, and more particularly of its cloth trade, that so little was provided as endowments for loan funds. No bequest was made for this purpose prior to 1561, and the total of the accumulations of such capital during our whole period was only £894 15s., or not more than 0·36 per cent. of the whole of the charitable resources of the county, this being, incidentally, one of the lowest proportions of funds for this purpose in all of England. Among the larger of these endowments may be mentioned the share which Canterbury possessed in the revolving loan fund created in 1566 by Sir Thomas White of London,<sup>2</sup> which made the sum of £104 available for loans to freemen of the city every twenty-fourth year.<sup>3</sup> Two generations later, in 1630, Henry Vanner, an alderman of Canterbury, created by will a loan fund with a capital worth of £200. Vanner charged the mayor and commonalty with responsibility for lending up to £5 to poor tradesmen of the city upon such terms and security as they might determine, but with the stipulation that no interest should be required.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Harris, *Kent*, i, 148 ; Dearn, T. D. W., *Weald of Kent* (Cranbrook, 1814), 113 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 517, 519 ; Hasted, *Kent*, VII, 117, 152.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Jordan, *Charities of London*, 174-175, 257-258, 370.

<sup>3</sup> *PP* 1823, VIII, 585, 596 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 273 ; Ditchfield, P. H., and George Clinch, eds., *Memorials of Old Kent* (L., 1907), 299. *Vide post*, 58.

<sup>4</sup> Hasted, *Kent*, XI, 207 ; Ireland, *Kent*, I, 591 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 283. *Vide infra*.

A considerably larger total of £3,580, amounting to 1·42 per cent. of all charities, was given by donors of the county for the establishment of apprenticeship plans of one sort or another. In addition to gifts for this purpose noted in earlier pages in connection with other benefactions, at least a few of the larger or more interesting of these funds may be mentioned. Thus in 1620 a member of the upper gentry, Sir William Stede of Harrietsham, instructed his executors to purchase lands with an annual value of £10, to be employed in setting forth in apprenticeships poor children of large families in the parishes of Harrietsham, Milton Regis, and Tonge. The endowment was vested in feoffees, but the appointment of the children was settled on the owner of the manor house in which Stede resided at the time of his death.<sup>1</sup> Some years later, in 1630, Henry Vanner of Canterbury, whose loan fund has just been described, vested in the municipal authorities of Canterbury capital of £150 to secure the care of six poor children and their placement in apprenticeships where they might learn trades to help them become self-supporting.<sup>2</sup> In his will drawn in 1644, as we have noted, John Smith, then of Hornsey, Middlesex, set forth his intention of founding an amply endowed almshouse in Longport (Canterbury) as well as providing other substantial benefactions for Hornsey and Canterbury. The residue of his estate, with a capital worth of probably £1,200, was vested for placing poor children of St. Paul's parish, Canterbury, in apprenticeships that would fit them for proper callings. His widow, Ann, in 1662 generously augmented this fund with real property then worth £20 p.a., which was to be employed by the trustees for apprenticing four additional children.<sup>3</sup> In 1651, a merchant of Faversham, John Castlock, gave to trustees, subject to a life interest for his widow, property valued at £160 capital at the least, the income of which was to be employed in putting out poor children of that town as apprentices.<sup>4</sup>

Of all the numerous experiments in the social rehabilitation of the poor, the provision of workhouses and stocks of goods on which poor men might earn their living and possibly learn skills as well was most favoured by Kentish benefactors. By far the largest amount of capital was provided for this purpose, the total of £4,217 3s. representing 1·67 per cent. of the whole of the charitable funds of the county.

The first of these benefactions was a modest sum of £20 given in

<sup>1</sup> PCC 39 Dale 1621 ; Hasted, *Kent*, VI, 141 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 214.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide ante*, 56. Vanner likewise bequeathed an annuity of £6 13s. 4d. to secure the augmentation of the living of Goodnestone.

<sup>3</sup> This apprenticeship endowment yielded £196 p.a. in 1863.

<sup>4</sup> PCC 183 Grey 1651 ; Hasted, *Kent*, VI, 328, 359 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 208. A Castlock was the last abbot of Faversham. The family, which secured its standing in the town during the days of this great relation and patron, remained prominent in the affairs of the community for a whole century. This donor, as well as his father, served as Mayor of Faversham.

the early Elizabethan period, but from that time until the outbreak of the Civil War there was a continuing and a considerable interest in divers undertakings of this sort. Sir Thomas White of London, among his many munificent charities, gave the city of Canterbury £100 to be employed as a stock to provide the poor with materials for spinning and weaving.<sup>1</sup> John Amies, a Maidstone merchant, who also left £45 to the sick of that town, in 1595 left £30 outright to the poor on the death of his wife, and a residue of approximately £100 for the same use. Amies' will, firmly riveted with scriptural injunctions, likewise established a trust fund of £100 wherewith the town authorities should set the poor at work on "hempe, flax, woolle, and other wares". The instrument further provided that unless this fund were matched by other funds of the same value within a period of seven years, the bequest should be employed for the outright relief of the poor. In 1602 the town officers were able to report that they had secured "one other *Cli.* and more" and determined that the income on the entire trust should be used to teach "the poor sorte of children to learne the making of cawles, buttons, button mouldes, thread or wynding thereof and like honest easy artes" in which, after some skill had been gained, a child might earn from 10d. to 12d. a week. Such children, who might at once earn enough to support themselves and to lend some aid to their impoverished families, were to be set at this work or, upon refusal, to be placed in the house of correction with no reward given for their labour.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vide ante*, 56.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert, W. B., *Accounts of Corpus Christi Fraternity* (Maidstone, 1865), 106-114; *Records of Maidstone*, 35-37, 40-44. This eloquent testament of faith and of the persuasive power of Scriptures, as the pious layman interpreted the Bible, is set forth in some detail in Amies' will: ". . . And wheras within this towne and parishe of Maidston, ther are and by all former tymes ther have bene . . . an exceedinge number of very aged lame and poore people, who through their greate wantes have not wherwith to sett them nor their children in woorke, wherby they might relieve their extreame necessities, but contrarily are by that meanes forced to become beggers from doore to doore, in which they beinge a little accustomed they doe never falle to labour againe but to whordomes, robberies and all other profanenes, to the greate offence of almighty God who hath expressly sayed that ther shalbe noe beggers in the lande; and yeat the same God hath sayed Deutronomie 15, verse 11, that ther shalbe alwayes founde needy folke in the lande, and Matt: 26, verse 12, Christ sayeth that he himself will not be alwayes with us, but the poore shall ever be with us, to the ende the ritch should have occasion to offer such sacrifice and homage unto him as he requyreth, with the goodes which they have abundantly bestowed upon them, namely to doe good willingly and readily unto the poore that stande in neade, for God doth accepte the almes dedes donne to the poore as donne unto himself. And where the lorde sayeth in Deutronomie afore cyted, the poore and the needy, his meaning is to make such an entercourse as the ritch may be mingled with the poore and either of them meete with the other, to the intente they shoulde communicate togeather, the poore to receave and the ritch to gyve, so that he may be honoured at the handes of them bothe as well for that the ritch man hath wherwith to doe good as for that

(Footnote 2 continued at foot of page 59).

## THE STRUCTURE OF ASPIRATIONS

The matching gift wherewith Amies' workhouse benefaction was ensured for Maidstone was made in 1602 by Sir Henry Cutts, a prominent landowner and a justice of Thornham, Kent, subject to an annuity of £4 payable to him and his wife during their lifetimes. At about the same time Cutts granted to the municipality of Maidstone an annual rent-charge of £3 for the relief of the poor of the parish.<sup>1</sup>

A few years earlier a Cranbrook tradesman, Alexander Weller, had left considerable property to trustees for the erection of a workhouse in that parish, together with an endowment which would supply a stock of raw materials on which the poor might be set on work. These funds became merged, probably in 1605, with properties left by Alexander Dence for the support of the poor of the community,<sup>2</sup> the combined fund perhaps possessing a capital value of not less than £420. Though the particulars are unfortunately by no means clear, it seems likely that the income was used for work projects by the parish authorities until the eighteenth century, when a house of correction was built with a portion of the capital and the remainder employed for setting the poor at useful occupations.<sup>3</sup> Some years later, in 1622, one of the trustees under Amies' will, Henry Hall of Maidstone, devised to overseers of the parish of Wye a modest endowment of £20 which they were requested to employ for the purchase of flax, wool, and other materials on which poor children and the aged poor might be set at work, in such wise "that out of the increase of it, they should have some recompense for their labours, and yet the principal sum or stock [be] reserved whole".<sup>4</sup> A much larger stock was provided for the parish of Ashford in 1625 by Thomas Milles, a gentleman of that community, who bequeathed £200 as a fund for securing the employ-

<sup>1</sup> PCC 4 Harte 1604 ; *Records of Maidstone*, 35 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 369.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide ante*, 39, and *post*, 61, 81.

<sup>3</sup> PCC 55 Drake 1596 ; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 515.

<sup>4</sup> Hasted, *Kent*, IV, 297, VII, 344, 361 ; *Records of Maidstone*, 43, 66, 67, 75. Hall was a member of the lower gentry of the county. The family resided at Wye for some generations before removing to Maidstone in the early seventeenth century.

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(Continuation of footnote 2 from page 58).

the poore acknowledge themselves to be sustayned for his name sake, and so both of them blesse and praise his name. And although (for my parte) I am not worthy to be numbred amongst those that (in this worlde) are cauled ritch, nor my porcion greate ; yeat, for that the Lorde in his greate mercy and providence towards me hath increased the same to a good measure, to my exceedinge comferte in my longe infirmities and sicknesses, and to the ende that hereby I may the more fully declare my thanckfullnes to the same god for these his blessinges and my sayd assured hope layed upon Jhesus Christe concerninge the life eternal and to come after the dissolution of this my mortall bodye, and that hereby the said poore people may be perpetually the more occasioned to glorifye the name of this our god I will and devise . . ."

ment of the poor. In 1628 this endowment had been increased to £250 by other gifts, the principal of which was a bequest of £30 made by Sir Richard Smith, and the income was employed to provide facilities, tools, and materials for the manufacture of various fabrics.<sup>1</sup>

A very large charitable estate was created in 1636 under the will of Sir John Hayward of Rochester, whose fortune stemmed from the mercantile prowess of his father and his father-in-law in London. Hayward left to two trustees the rich manor of Minster in the Isle of Sheppey and other lands, which together possessed a capital worth of upwards of £1,000 in the year of the bequest. His feoffees, with the advice of named persons, were to use this great endowment for the erection of workhouses and furnishing the poor with remunerative work in such places as might be decided on, provided only that St. Nicholas' parish, Rochester, be one. In 1651 the trustees vested a major portion of the property, then yielding £50 p.a., for the erection and maintenance of such a workhouse to serve the needs of the poor in Rochester, while at a much later date a similar establishment was provided at Crediton (Devon) by the then trustees, harassed as they were by the litigation arising from the imprecise instructions of Hayward's will.<sup>2</sup>

### C. *Municipal betterments.*

The benefactors of Kent gave approximately as much for various undertakings designed to bring physical improvements to their communities as they had given for experimentation in social rehabilitation. In all, £11,558 15s., or 4·59 per cent. of the whole, was provided for the several heads included under this somewhat amorphous category. As compared with several other rich and socially mature counties, this

<sup>1</sup> *PP* 1837, XXIII, 409; *Hasted, Kent*, VI, 378, 403, VII, 537. This well-founded charity was flourishing in Hasted's day, employment at that time (ca. 1790) being given to about sixty poor persons in the bleaching of Irish linen.

<sup>2</sup> *PCC* 69 Pile 1636; *PP* 1819, X-A, 133; *PP* 1820, V, 81, 226; *PP* 1824, XIII, 57; *PP* 1837, XXIII, 388, 474; *PP* 1837-38, XXV, 423; *Hasted, Kent*, VI, 220-221. Hayward's father, a London clothworker, was Sir Rowland Hayward, Lord Mayor of London in 1571 and again in 1591 (*vide* Jordan, *Charities of London*, 231, 392, 395). Sir John made a rich marriage with Catherine, a daughter of Customer Smith, and settled near Rochester. He purchased the manor of Minster, with the site of the monastery, from Sir Michael Livesey in 1623.

This charitable estate increased enormously in value. When it was sold and the funds re-invested in the early nineteenth century, the total worth was £10,300 12s. 6d., of which Rochester received one-half. The workhouse at Crediton, established in 1805, was to care for twenty-four persons and to provide education for the children, training in trades, and apprenticeship stipends. Surplus income accruing to the Rochester branch of the charity had in 1718 been assigned towards the support of three charity schools for Rochester, Strood, and Frindsbury.

It should be noted, as well, that before his death Sir John had given an annual rental of £20 for the support of a school at Bridgnorth, Shropshire, previously founded by his father.