

and introduced more irregularity into industry for both employers and employees. The town laborer engaged in a large establishment was, like the rural laborer on a large farm, completely separated from the land, from capital, from any active connection with the administration of industry, from any probable opportunity of rising out of the laboring class. His prospects were therefore as limited as his position was laborious and precarious.

The rapid growth of the manufacturing towns, especially in the north, drawing the scattered population of other parts of the country into their narrow limits, caused a general breakdown in the old arrangements for providing water, drainage, and fresh air, and made rents high, and consequently living in crowded rooms necessary. The factory towns in the early part of the century were filthy, crowded, and demoralizing, compared alike with their earlier and their present condition.

In the higher grades of economic society the advantages of the recent changes were more distinct, the disadvantages less so. The rise of capital and business enterprise into greater importance, and the extension of the field of competition, gave greater opportunity to employing farmers, merchants, and manufacturers, as well as to the capitalists pure and simple. But even for them the keenness of competition and the exigencies of providing for the varying conditions of distant markets made the struggle for success a harder one, and many failed in it.

In many ways, therefore, it might seem that the great material advances which had been made, the removal of artificial restrictions, the increase of liberty of action, the extension of the field of competition, the more enlightened opinions on economic and social relations, had failed to increase human happiness appreciably; indeed, for a time had made the condition of the mass of the people worse instead of better.