

Article

The Making of the Discourse on the Poor

— Pamphlets concerning the poor in 17th century England —

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Abstracts

The problem of the poor was so serious in seventeenth century England that many authors published their pamphlets arguing the solution. Among those pamphlets, the writings concerning employment of the poor written by M. S. and T. L. are to be examined first in this article, after treating some authors' classification of the poor. And Cornelis-son's pamphlet on a commune for the poor is to be discussed second. And Winstanly's declaration of settlement on common land by the poor will be argued last. The purpose of this article is to make clear some parts of arguments over the poor in seventeenth century England.

KEY WORDS: the poor, pamphlets, employment, 17th century England,

I

Although the problem of the poor in early modern England was severest during the period from the second half of the sixteenth century to the first half of the seventeenth century, it remained a serious social problem even in the second half of the seventeenth century.¹⁾ In fact, a lot of pamphlets on the problem were published

1) As concerns the problem of the poor in early modern England, see E. M. Leonard, *The Early History of English Poor Relief*, (1900), Frank Cass, repr. 1965; M. James, *Social Problems and Policy during the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660*, London, 1930; W. K. Jordan, *The Charities of London 1480-1660*, (1960), Archon Books, repr. 1974; A. L. Beier, *Masterless Men*, Methuen, 1985; J. Pound, *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England*, Longman, 1986; P. Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, Longman, 1988.

mainly in the latter half of the seventeenth century in England. Various authors argued the causes of the problem and proposed their own measures to resolve it in the pamphlets. It can, therefore, be insisted that the discourse on the poor or the study of the poor was being made in England at that time.

Some important pamphlets on the poor among those published in the seventeenth century will be argued in this article, excepting the pamphlets that insisted on making workhouses for the profitable employment of the poor.

II

According to Paul Slack, the general conditions of the poor in early modern England could be summarized as follows. The number of the poor increased and the level of their poverty grew worse during the sixteenth century. Although the level of poverty improved after about 1620, the number was first rising slightly and then levelling off after the year. And throughout the seventeenth century, the number of the poor in danger of starvation evidently decreased, while the number in shallow poverty increased. The level of poverty, therefore, improved in the seventeenth century, but the number did not decrease.²⁾

And the situation would inevitably become disastrous in case of famine or in the period of disorder such as the Civil War. For example, a census of Stafford in the dearth year of 1622 described 25 percent of the population as poor. And 23 percent of the population of Worcester was the poor without relief in 1646, after the destruction due to the Civil War.³⁾

Vagrants among the poor made the most serious social problem at

2) P. Slack, *op. cit.*, p.39.

3) *Ibid.*, p.72.

that time. According to A. L. Beier, the problem of vagrancy grew at an alarming rate between 1560 and 1640, and it reached a crisis point between 1620 and 1650.⁴⁾ Records of arrest, for instance, show that 24,867 persons were convicted for vagrancy between 1631 and 1639, that is to say, an average of 4,447 a year. But the documents do not tell us the exact number of vagrants, because the authorities did not arrest all vagrants and the documents contain many persons arrested in repeat. And the vagrants, as Beier says, would appear to be more numerous than they were, because of residents' precaution⁵⁾ against them.

It seems that hatred toward vagrants and "idle" persons was getting stronger and stronger among the contemporary residents in the sixteenth century, and it was still strong in the seventeenth century, as the authors of pamphlets clearly expressed it. For example, L. Lee, the writer of a pamphlet published in 1644, says that "such persons as live idly out of any calling are ulcers in a Commonwealth, oppressors of a State, and impoverishers of a kingdome."⁶⁾

And R. Younge expressed the feelings as follows, classifying the poor.

But of Poor there are two sorts; Gods poor, and the Devils: impotent poor, and impudent poor: The poor upon whom we should exercise our beneficence, is the honest labourer, and the poor housholder; who either through the greatnesse of their charge, or badness of their trade; crosses, losses, sickness, suretiship, or other casualties; being brought behinde hand, are not able in the sweat of their face to earn their bread: or the blinde

4) A. L. Beier, *op. cit.*, p.14.

5) *Ibid.*, p.15.

6) M. James, *op. cit.*, p.246.

and maimed, the aged and decrepit, the weak widows, or young orphans: which are either past their labour, or not come unto it: these are principal objects of bounty, and he that is godly and discreet; will rather give to those that work and beg not, then to those that beg and work not: For according to the Apostles rule, They that will not labour must not eat: but rather the law is duly and with severity to be executed; which though it may seem sharp, yet it is full of mercy to the honest poor, who might be more liberally relieved, if these idle devourers did not eat up their portion, For there are many sturdy beggars, and vagrant Rogues; the blemish of our Government, and a burthen to the Common-wealth: which kinde of poor, are not to be maintain'd in their wicked courses: For to feed them is to fat vermine, to feed Mice and Rats, and Polecats;

The author condemns the poor and vagrants, who are able-bodied and not working, as “vermin”, and insists that relieving them is nothing but evildoing. As for such “idle” persons, the authorities severely punished them by Poor Laws and tried to reform their “idleness” through the forced labour in Bridewell or House of Corrections in the sixteenth century.⁸⁾ But in the latter half of the seventeenth century, we can trace the development of thought that they should be positively employed and put on work, as the thinkers like

7) R. Younge, *The Poores Advocate, The Second Part*, 1654, pp.9-10.

8) Concerning London Bridewell, see my books and articles written in Japanese, and my English articles, Takashi UHARA, “London Bridewell in the Early Elizabethan Period”, *Journal of Baltic and Scandinavian Studies*, vol. 4, 1994; “Bridewell and People, Social Control in Early Modern London”, *The Kyotogakuen University Review, Faculty of Business Administration*, vol.11, no.1, July 2001; “Vagrancy and Punishment, Social Policy in Early Modern London”, *Journal of Baltic and Scandinavian Studies*, vol.11 · 12, 2002; “Morality and People, Social Control in Early Modern London”, *The Kyotogakuen University Review, Faculty of Business Administration*, vol.18, no.1, November 2008. And see also, Paul Griffiths, *Lost Londons, Change, Crime and Control in the Capital City, 1550-1660*, Cambridge UP., 2008.

Hartlib, Hale, Child, and Haines expressed it. They argued that the "idle" poor and vagrants should be profitably employed in work-houses, regarding them as work force for the national wealth, although such persons had long been looked at negatively. But even the progressive thinkers like them had, almost in common, the idea that people who would not labour were not allowed to eat, and the criticism of relief which would foster only "idleness", as R. Younge says above.

Concerning classification of the poor, the distinction between the poor who deserves relief and the poor who doesn't became clearer in the sixteenth century.⁹⁾ And various pamphlets in the seventeenth century made more complex classification.

One J. R., the author of a pamphlet making proposals for the poor, classifies them as follows.¹⁰⁾

1. The first such as are Beggars borne, and so live and dye, never labouring in any calling so continue to the shame of the Nation, and of the Gospel.
2. The second sort are Vagabonds, and counterfeit Rogues; some dissembling lame, some one disease, or soar, some another: what their conversation is when they meet together, by drunkennesse and swearing, hath vexed many a godly soule passing by them These should be provided for by im-
ployment, it is not sufficient to passe them from place to place, and correct them as the law requireth (this were cruelty) unless im-
ployment be provided for them, if they will not work, then let a rod be for the fools back.
3. There are a third sort, that labor and get a little mony, then

9) P. Slack. *op. cit.*, p.23.

10) J. R., *Proposals in behalfe of the Poore of this Nation*, 1653, pp2-3.

will be drunk, raile, and quarrel one with another, ······, it is expected the Regulators of the Law will mend such abuses.

The classification of the poor by H. Arthington is more elaborate.¹¹⁾
In the first place, the poor are divided into next two categories.

1. The impotent poore.
2. The poore able to worke.

And the impotent poor are classified into four categories.

1. Aged persons past their worke.
2. Lamed persons unable to worke.
3. Little infants without parents.
4. Poore sicke persons during their weakness.

All these persons should be maintained unless they have enough property to sustain themselves. As for the sick poor, they don't have to sell goods that they have got in time of good health. All such goods are to be spared, as the laws of Moses provided in that case.

The poor able to work are divided into next two types.

1. Such as may earne their whole maintenance.
2. Such as must be relieved in part.

The poor who are able to live by their labour consist of three sorts.

11) Henry Arthington. *Provision for the Poore, now in Penurie, out of the storehouse of God's plentie*. 1597. B2 back - B3.

1. Such as are willing to take pains, and cannot get worke.
2. Such as are yong and lustie, yet unwilling to labour.
3. Such as are committed for some offences, and have not wherewith to be maintained.

The poor, who are not able to live by their labour, yet fit to labour, and willing to take pains, consist of three categories as follows. And all these sorts ought to be relieved in part, according to their necessities.

1. Orphaned children above seven yeares olde.
2. Such as bee overcharged with children, having nothing to maintaine them but their hand labour.
3. Such as fall to decay in their workes, by reason of their yeares, weaknesse or infirmities.

Classifying the poor as above, Arthington denies the relief for the able-bodied poor who should support themselves. His basic attitude toward the poor is expressed in his words, "none live idly that can labour, nor any begge that are unable"¹²⁾. In other words, all the poor who are able to work must labour, and public relief should be given to the poor who are not.

After classifying the poor, as we saw some examples, various authors of pamphlets made their own proposals to cope with the problem of poverty. Although every author would agree with each other that the problem of poverty was, as M. James says, the most serious social problem¹³⁾ at that time, their proposals for the solution of it were really various.

12) *Ibid.*, B3.

13) M. James, *op. cit.*, p.273.

III

In the first place, two pamphlets proposing to employ the poor without using workhouses are to be examined in this section. The first is a pamphlet written by one M. S. and chiefly treating the problem of poor orphans.¹⁴⁾

M. S. also begins by classifying the poor. They are divided into next three sorts.

1. Sturdy Rogues and Whores.
2. Blinds and Lame.
3. Aged and Young.

“Sturdy Rogues”, in number 1, is almost synonymous with vagrants. According to M. S., many proper laws has been enacted to cope with them, but few are put in execution owing to officers’ negligence.

……; and for these are appointed Marshals, and Beadels. But when a Marshalls eyes be not in all places, or his men will scarce look to any, then these vermine increase;¹⁵⁾

The cause of officers’ negligence lies in their fear that when they would try to arrest vagrants, they might be knocked by them, because vagrants are sturdy. Therefore, M. S. says, only two measures remain toward them. The one is a labouring prison, or house of correction, the other is the gallows. And “there”, the author says, “I thinke it fittest to leave them, being people not worth the

14) M. S., *The Poore Orphans Court, or Orphans Cry*, 1636.

15) *Ibid.*, B.

speaking of”.

Toward the second sort of the poor, blinds and lame, the author also takes a rather severe attitude. Although they “are suffered to beg” and have “good reason” to do, begging is generally prohibited by law.¹⁶⁾ The authorities, therefore, have duty to relieve them. But if lame persons can use their hands, they should have diverse kinds of works like net-making, sail-making, carding, and spinning. Only those who are blind or cannot use hands, the author says, should be publicly relieved. Although the poor relief has been made traditionally to any handicapped poor people, M. S. insists on restricting the relief by means of dividing them into those who can do some manual work and those who cannot.

As for the third sort, aged and young, the author declares that his pamphlet “was written for” them, but in fact he argues only about poor orphans. He plainly expresses his pity for them.

…………, these be those that I desire you in office, and in whole power it lies, to looke with their eyes, and pittie with their hearts these poore wretched miserable wretches, those who have neither father nor mother, no, nor any friends, ………, and those be they that make blood drop from my heart, whilst my pen cannot expresse their misery,¹⁷⁾ ………

M. S. insists that many of those orphans were cast off by wicked parents or by their masters after having been placed out to apprentices by the parish. He proposes first that such poor orphans should be employed in American colonies. Every parish ought to survey all

16) The statutes of 1598 and 1601, by which laws Elizabethan Poor Law had been completed, prohibited begging totally.

17) M. S. *op. cit.*, B back.

poor children, and give employment to those children who have enough ability, in the following way.

Every Ship being of burden 200 Tuns, should employ two or three boyes.

Every Coale-ship trading to London from Newcastle to take one.

Every Parish might raise out of the Parish a stocke so to employ them, until they grow to some stature, then to be sent to the Plantations, to some carefull Master there, and they to give a true account of the children, how, and in what estate they be with them.

Every ship that goes to Virginia to carry sixe boyes and sixe girles, every one to carry the like to New England, and so to our other plantations, and the Parish to pay their passage,¹⁸⁾ so they might have them but sixe yeeres apprentice;

After stating his proposal for the employment of them in America, he criticizes the defects in the administration of policies for the poor. If the laws were carefully executed, he says, no orphans should perish in the street. Such a misery is due to the fault of officers, not of the laws. He proposes, therefore, some measures to make proper performance of the policy to relieve orphans and disabled poor persons.¹⁹⁾

1. The Overseers of the poore of every Parish appointed purposely by the Law, to see the impotent, poore, and Orphans duly relieved, ought every weeke to enquire what poore there are in

18) *Ibid.*, B2.

19) *Ibid.*, B3-B3 back.

their parishes, and to allot them a competent allowance according to their necessities.

2. These Overseers should weekly enquire how these Orphans and impotent persons, which they place out to others are provided for, and to examine whether they have food sufficient allowed them, and in case they finde them with whom they are placed, negligent in providing for them, or in suffering them to stray abroad, and so to perish, or miscarry, to complaine of them to the Magistrates who have power to inflict such punishments on them, as the quality of their offence demerits.

3. Those children that are of age and strength to worke, ought to be bound out to some trade or other, or else set to worke upon some common parish stocke, of which the Overseers of the poore for the time being, or some others deputed by the Parish, should have the manning and government, appointing every child to that worke hee is fit, and setting some Master worke-man over them who should instruct them.

4. The Constables, Overseers of the poore, and Beadells, especially if they see any such poore Orphans, or children, or other impotent persons, begging, playing, or loytering in the streets, should presently examine them what they are, and where they live: If in another Parish they should presently convey them thither, and acquaint the Overseers of the poore, or Constables with them, that so it might keep them & provide for them if neede be according as our lawes prescribe. If their owne parish, if they are poore and neede reliefe, they are forthwith to take care for their supply and education, and in case they are fit for any worke or employment, to set them to that they are able to performe, and to traine them up or place them out to such who will bring them up to some honest labour.

5. When such Orphans and poore children are thus placed out apprentices, the Overseers and such as binde them out apprentices, and their successors, or at leastwise the Overseers of the parishes, or Masters, or Alderman of the severall ward, where they are placed, ought, and may monethly enquire, how they are used by their Masters, whether they allow them competent food and raiment, while they keepe them to their work, and give them that which is fit for Christians, or persons of their age and quality: whether they keepe them in their service, or else turne them away without just cause, (in all or some of which many Masters are often delinquent) And in case they find them pervert, to complaine against them for it, that so they may be punished in a just and legall manner.

M. S. closed his arguments in the pamphlet by one more sentence, that is, if the officers would practice their duties diligently, and if the magistrates would punish severely the officers who are negligent in their duties, "wee should quickly have no begging, no perishing, nor complaining in our streets"²⁰⁾.

Although we can understand his feeling of pity for the poor orphans, his view that the defects in the administration of policies for the poor are due only to negligence of the officers cannot be accepted. The reason is that the policies for the poor had always a serious problem, that is, the shortage of the resources. As the number of the poor increased, the amount of poor rates inflicted on the residents was getting larger and larger. Some residents refused to pay it.²¹⁾ It is needless to say that workhouses would be erected later for the solution of the problem.

20) *Ibid.*, B3 back.

21) M. James, *op. cit.*, p.250.

The second pamphlet examined in this section was written by one T. L., and it was an “appeal” made to the parliament after the Restoration in order to uproot beggars. According to the author, various evil practices that many people fall into through idleness can be prevented by means of supplying the poor with labour and relief. The policy providing the poor with labour and relief should be principally carried out by the authorities of parish. The points of his appeal are as follows.²³⁾

1. To take Notice how many Old, Impotent, and young Children be in the Parish, and Supply them by Collection, and also Help such whose Labour is not sufficient to yield them Maintenance: But if any in the Parish want Employment, that are able to work, set them work according to the wholesome Laws of the Nation.
2. To take the most Orderly way for the manner of doing, according to the variety of Places and kinds of work; If there be Twenty Persons in a Country Village that want employment, then the Parish agree with some Clothier, Stuff, or Stockin-maker to furnish them with so much Work as they can do: So in great Towns, and places of Cloathing, one Clothier take 10, another 20, being brought in by Authority; ……… So in great Cities, where is much Trading on Silk, Wooll, Hair, Winding, Weaving, Button-making, &c. every Parish, or Division, agree with some Trades-man, or men, to provide for 10 or 20 as aforesaid, and so may rise to Hundreds or Thousands by the same Rule: ………
3. To settle a Poor man's Office, First, Where Handy-crafts

22) T. L., *An Appeal to the Parliament concerning the Poor*, 1660.

23) *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.

men and Labourers that want Work, and such as want Workmen, may enquire: Secondly, Where Boyes that would, or are fit to go Apprentice, may enquire of Masters; and such as want Servants in City or Countrey, or whom they have spoken to, may enquire: Thirdly, Where Maids that would, or are fit to go Apprentices, or Covenant-Servants, or some that want such, may enquire; … Fourthly, Where all Poor People that are in distress or danger of Perishing, may make their Conditions Known, that Means may be used to Supply their wants.

4. That all Persons whatsoever, may have free Access and Acceptance without mollestation, to give in true Information concerning any neglect of the Poor to any in Authority, Justice of the Peace, or any in Power, as there may be cause; and that every one that neglecteth his Duty, restore to the Poor so much as they have done them wrong; and that Distress be made if they refuse to Pay presently.

5. That all Judges of Assizes and Sessions, lay open the sad condition of the Poor in their Charge, and what the Law provides, and take Accompt what is done; and receive all true Informations concerning any Neglect of the Poor, and see the Penalty justly executed: The Law is made for the Lawlesse and Disobedient.

6. That no Poor People be denied their former Liberty, nor strict Course taken against them, until some good Means be used to Supply their wants.

According to the author, if these proposals will be "faithfully executed, there may not be a Beggar in England"²⁴⁾. But it must have

24) *Ibid.*, p.4.

been very difficult to execute his proposal that the parish authorities make craft masters and tradesmen to employ the poor. Because poor people were usually regarded as idle, few masters and tradesmen would have been likely to employ them voluntarily. Although his proposal for founding the institution like public employment bureau, in number 3, is unique and remarkable, it could be, in fact, difficult for parish authorities to operate it, because such an institution would need the system which covers the area beyond parish. Some writers objected to the parish-central policy for the poor, which was the principal idea in the Elizabethan Poor Laws, but T. L. obeyed it and, therefore, his proposals contained some restrictions.

IV

The title of a pamphlet written by P. Cornelis-son is "A Way propounded to make the poor in these and other Nations happy, by bringing together a fit, sutable, and well-qualified People into one Houshold-government, or little Common-wealth, wherein every one may keep his propriety, and be employed in some work or other, as he shall be fit, without being oppressed. Being the way not only to rid these and other Nations from idle, evil, and disorderly persons, but also from all such as have sought²⁵⁾ and found out many Inventions, to live-upon the labour of others". And there is an additional remark, that is, "Whereunto is also annexed an Invitation to this Society, or Little Common-wealth". In short, the author insists on founding a utopian little community by means of employing the poor. What are the details of his plan?

Cornelis-son expresses, first, his desire to bring four sorts of people to his one household government or little common wealth. The four

25) P. Cornelis-son, *A Way propounded to* , 1659.

sorts of people, whom the world chiefly consists of, are husbandmen, handicrafts men, mariners, and masters of arts and sciences, although he doesn't explain the basis of his idea. The purpose of founding the little common wealth is, he says, that "we may the better eschue the yoke of Temporal and Spiritual Pharaohs who have long enough domineered over our bodies and souls, and set up again (as in former times) Righteousness, Love and Brotherly Sociableness²⁶⁾". And he wishes to convince those who place all greatness not in well-doing but in domineering, contrary to the doctrine of Jesus, of the values of his community. Jesus came not to be served but to serve. But in the world not those who do most service to others but those who have most servants are regarded as the greatest. Whereas true Christians endeavour to ease men's burdens, others are still making the burden heavier with new devises, as if their design were to vex and grieve poor people.

After expressing his religious beliefs, the author describes the details of his community.

Taking upon them every day except the Sabbath so many as are fit to work the labour of six hours, beginning ordinarily from 9 of the clock in the morning to twelve at noon, and from three till six at night, if any desires to have an afternoons liberty, he may work from 4 or 6 of the clock in the morning till 10 or 12 at noon or labour another day so much the more, they that have hard work to do may begin in Summer Morning while it is cool, and take their rest in the heat of the day,

Six working hours system is manifested here. And the author

26) *Ibid.*, p.3.

makes clear later that those who work in the system are only "honest, rational, impartial persons". Such poor people are employed in those four occupations above mentioned. Then how about vagrants and "idle" poor persons who refuse to labour?

They that are set on work by us [being not fit to be of our Society] receiving wages shall work 12 hours in a day, from 6 in the morning to 12 at noon, and from 2 till 8 at night till any of them be fit and willing to come into us.

Making difference in working hours, the author insists that those poor people who are lacking will to work must be put to work for twelve hours. They receive wages and go to their own houses or lodging places daily, as the author writes later. Until they become fit to be members of the society, they must endure the preparatory term.

Those who are not poor but rich can also take part in the activities of the society.

The Children of rich people [who are not of our society] coming to School, after we have found out the ablest masters, to be instructed in Arts, Sciences and Languages are every day, except the Sabbath, learning some useful Trade, to work 3 hours,

The rich people, being not of our Society, having a desire to dwell amongst us, shall not be bound to work, if they will sometimes of themselves do any thing, they will hold forth a good Example to all rich time-loosers in the world, and paying for their diet, cloathing, lodging and other necessaries they shall be free.²⁷⁾

27) *Ibid.*, p.4.

The purpose of giving vocational education to the children of rich people is making them to be able to earn their living in case of losing property.

In order to establish the society, he proposes to raise contributions and make funds for employing people and buying a piece of land, where the four sorts of men above mentioned come with their money and commodities and live together. But their private property is secured.

Those that come into our Society shall not be bound to make their goods Common for (according to the tenth Commandment) none ought to covet another man's goods.

If any will out of a free real and bountiful heart bring in any thing to increase the Stock, it shall be used for the common benefit, without being appropriated for any mans own in particular.

.....

If any be minded to leave the Society, they shall not only receive that which they brought, but also a share of the profit which hath been made since they came to the Society, if no profit hath been made in their time, they shall receive none, that²⁸⁾ so they that come into us may not seek their own private gain.

Although private property is secured, those who belong to the society should work for the society, and the profit made by them is possessed by the society. The profit is used for providing the members of the society and their families with necessities. And when the member leaves the society, he receives a part of the profit.

28) *Ibid.*, pp.4-5.

In order to operate the community, he says, it needs two great houses, one in or about a city and another in the country near a river. The house in or about a city is so big that 20 or 30 families of merchants and tradesmen can dwell in it, having shops of various wares like apparel, shoes, hats, and so on, which are to be made by the craftsmen belonging to the society. In the house of the country, husbandmen, craftsmen, schoolmasters, and mariners dwell. And according to the author, the trade made by the society will undoubtedly develop, because all the wares can be sold at low prices. Because the cost of living for the members is low, the wares can be produced at low costs.

As for the government of the society, he stands for democracy. For instance, nobody can rule the office longer than one year, lest he should domineer it. The chief governor of the whole society is chosen by election not for his wealth but for his wisdom.

It is very profitable, he says, for many families to dwell together and also take meals together, because some women do the housewifery and others can be employed in some works.

But among the craftsmen and merchants who have already had their own jobs, is there anyone who wishes to work for the society? The author emphasizes the following points.

Any handicrafts men, or tradesmen, may be in fear, the business being not settled, to make a beginning, doubting that he removing from his particular employment to this common society, by losing some Customers, shall want a subsistence, but considering the opportunity to have the custome of all those that dwell with him, is freed from that fear; neither doth any one stand singly by himself alone. Any if by sickness or otherwise become indisposed, the rest being united as members of one

body, shall work for him; and we being assured of one another's faithfulness, shall exceed in love all other societies.²⁹⁾

Some being healthful and able with their Trade of Merchandize to get more than others, are commonly not inclined to come into us, because they love their private gain more than the common good; but considering how soon their health may be lost, it will be reasonable for them, without delay, to desire such a wished estate and condition for themselves and families.³⁰⁾

In short, this society is a kind of insurance institution. The society secures living for any member who would become to be unable to work for aging or sickness. The women in the society having lost their husbands, they and their children are cared for. The children in the society are to be brought up after their parents die. The profit made by the craftsmen and merchants belonging to the society is possessed by it, and the loss made by them is also attributed to it.

As we can guess from the above quotations, the society seems to have sought financial success by means of inviting the craftsmen and merchants who have made success of jobs, although the original purpose of founding the society is to employ the poor. Such craftsmen and merchants would become the core of members, employing the poor and promoting the trades of the society. And as for the children of the poor people, the author designs to give them the fundamental education and vocational training. He also declares that "the Children are not to be taught any humane Forms of Religion, but the writings of the Saints".

An invitation to this society covering 14 pages is added to this

29) *Ibid.*, p.9.

30) *Ibid.*, p.10.

pamphlet. And it is declared that the society is to be settled in London, Bristol, and Ireland. But the end of this project is unknown.

V

The pamphlet which is examined last in this article has rather different characteristics from the others. Its title is "A Declaration from the Poor oppressed People of England, directed to all that call themselves, or are called Lords of Manors, through this Nation; That have begun to cut, or that through fear and covetousness, do intend to cut down³¹⁾ the Woods and Trees that grow upon the Commons and Waste Land". The last page of this pamphlet, which was published in 1649, contains the name of Gerrard Winstanly, who is the probable writer of it, and 44 his supporters' names. G. Winstanly, who has often been argued in Japan, is famous as the leader of Diggers, the most left sect in the Puritan Revolution. This pamphlet could be considered as the remarkable expression of the ideas of the poor themselves. And some parts of Winstanly's characteristic thoughts are to be made clear in this section.

At the beginning of the pamphlet, Winstanly and his supporters assert themselves to be representatives of the poor, saying "We whose names are subscribed, do in the name of all the poor oppressed people in England, declare unto you, that call yourselves Lords of Manors, and Lords of the Land". And after the assertion, he sets forth his thoughts, declaring as follows.

....., That the earth was not made purposely for you, to be Lords of it, and we to be your Slaves, Servants, and Beggars; but it was made to be a common Livelihood to all, without respect of

31) G. Winstanly, et. al. *A Declaration from the Poor oppressed People of England*, , 1649.

persons: And that your buying and selling of Land, and the fruits of it, one to another, is the cursed thing, and was brought in by War; which hath, and still does establish murder, and theft, in the hands of some branches and Mankinde over others which is the greatest outward burden, and unrighteous power, that the Creation groans under: For the power of inclosing Land, and owing Propriety, was brought into the Creation by your Ancestors by the Sword, which first did murther their fellow Creatures, Men, and after plunder of steal away their Land, and left this Land successively to you, their Children. And therefore, though you did not kill or theeve, yet you hold that cursed thing in your hand, by the power of the Sword; ······

For though you and your Ancestors got your Propriety by murther and theft, and you keep it by the same power from us, that have an equal right to the Land with you, by the righteous Law of Creation, yet we shall have no occasion of quarreling (as you do) about that disturbing devil, called Particular Propriety: For the Earth, with all her Fruits of Corn, Cattle, and such like, was made to be a common Store-house of Livelihood to all Mankinde, friend, and foe, without exception.³²⁾

Winstanly denies, therefore, private property system, and considers the earth including its fruits as common property of human beings. And he advocates making a kind of commune.

For after our work of the Earthly community is advanced, we must make use of Gold and Silver, as we do of other mettals, but

32) G. Winstanly, et. al., *op. cit.*, (p.1). As the pamphlet has no page numbers, the first page is indicated as (p.1).

not to buy and sell withal; for buying and selling is the great cheat, that robs and steals the Earth one from another: It is that which makes some Lords, others Beggars, some Rulers, others to be ruled; and makes great Murderers and Theeves to be imprisoners, and hangers of little ones, or of sincere-hearted men.

.....; seeing we are made to see our Priviledges, given us in our Creation, which have hitherto been denied to us, and our Fathers, since the power of the Sword began to rule, And the secrets of the Creation have been locked up under the traditional, Parrat-like ³³⁾ speaking, from the Universities, and Colledges for Scholars,

He insists that landlords have plundered the rights which the poor ought to own originally to land. And he directs his criticism more concretely toward the enclosure of common land and cutting common woods down by landlords.

....., that some of you, that have been Lords of Manors, do cause the Trees and Woods that grow upon the Commons, which you pretend a Royalty unto, to be cut down and sold, for your own private use, whereby the Common Land, which your own mouths doe say belongs to the poor, is impoverished, and the poor oppressed people robbed of their Rights, ³⁴⁾

..... the Earth was made for us, as well as for you: And if the Common Land belongs to us who are the poor oppressed, surely

33) *Ibid.*, (p.2).

34) *Ibid.*, (p.3).

the woods that grow upon the Commons belong to us likewise:³⁵⁾

And the purpose of this pamphlet lies in making the following declaration.

And therefore, the main thing we aym at, and for which we declare our Resolutions to go forth, and act, is this, To lay hold upon, and as we stand in need, to cut and fell, and make the best advantage we can of the Woods and Trees, that grow upon the Commons, To be a stock for our selves, and our poor Brethren, through the Land of England, to plant the Commons withal; and to provide us bread to eat, till the Fruit of our labors in the Earth bring forth increase; and we shall meddle with none of your Proprieties (but what is called Commonage) till the Spirit in you, make you cast up your Lands and Goods, ………³⁶⁾

So then, we declare unto you, that do intend to cut our Common Woods and Trees, that you shall not do it; ………³⁷⁾

After the above declaration, Winstanly really acted on it. In April 1649, he and his followers settled on the common land of St George's Hill in Surrey, clearing the common woods. Although his commune was destroyed by the Cromwell's army, the movement of Diggers begun by him, that is, the movement of making commune by means of settling the common land would continue in England.³⁸⁾

35) *Ibid.*, (p.4).

36) *Ibid.*, (p.3).

37) *Ibid.*, (p.4).

38) C. Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, Penguin Books, 1975, pp.124ff.

VI

In this article only a few are examined among many pamphlets concerning the problem of the poor published in seventeenth century England. Various authors of such pamphlets expressed their own ideas as above. It seems that such development of the arguments on the poor shows how serious the problem of the poor was at that time. And in the making of the discourse on the poor, we can see clearly the birth of people's different consciousness of the poor in the seventeenth century from that in the sixteenth century. Such consciousness is somewhat expressed in the pamphlets cited in this article.

The common consciousness that the poor were "dangerous" existed in the society of sixteenth century England, because they were regarded as "idle" and disorderly. As their "idleness", therefore, needed to be corrected, the poor were to be severely punished in the sixteenth century. The severe and even cruel punishments against vagrants prescribed in the Elizabethan poor laws indicate the fact in full. Such a method of reforming the idle through compulsory labour as London Bridewell tried to practice made a new departure. But in that case as well, the poor and vagrants were considered to be negative existence as ever.³⁹⁾

But a new sense of the poor appeared among the pamphlets in the seventeenth century, although the old one still remained. That is the sense that the poor should be employed positively. And that is the idea that the resources of national wealth can be found in the labour of the poor. In other words, it is the idea of so called "profitable employment of the poor", regarding them as the object of profit. This

39) See my articles above noted.

new thought that employing the poor profitably brings economical prosperity resulted in the movement of making workhouses. The thought was often expressed in the pamphlets in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.⁴⁰⁾

But the ideas expressed in the writings above quoted in this article should be evaluated as precedent forms to the new thought and as original expression by the poor themselves.

40) See my article, "Richard Haines and his Workhouse, A Plan for Employment of the Poor in 17th century England", *The Kyotogakuen University Review, Faculty of Business Administration*, vol.18, no.2, March 2009.