FACTS ABOUT THE DEATH-RATE

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH

It is quite as important, both to the sanitarian and to the student of social problems, to know what diseases and "external causes" are responsible for the deaths, as it is to know how many deaths occur.

The International List of Causes of Death, used by most of the countries which keep vital statistics, includes 189 titles, as revised in 1909. Deaths are distributed among these causes very unevenly. In the registration area, for example, in 1913, yellow fever, Asiatic cholera, and miliary fever were not represented at all; there was one death ascribed to chyluria and 93,421 to tuberculosis, and the rest of the 890,848 deaths which occurred during the year were scattered between these two extremes, among the other 184 causes.

In the table on page 21 the principal causes of death are arranged in order of importance. The forty-two causes enumerated account together for more than nine-tenths of all the deaths. The first nine account for two-thirds and are really in a class by themselves; the tenth is so far below the ninth that it may be considered as beginning the group of secondary importance.

Each age of life has a set of diseases peculiar to itself. The table on page 23 shows the ten leading causes in each of eleven successive periods: infancy, early and later childhood, and by decades after the age of ten. The causes of death are arranged in the order of their general importance at all ages; the figures in the col-

*The reason for presenting the first forty-two, rather than some other number, will appear in the discussion of the next table.
OTHER NUMBERS IN THIS SERIES


SERMON ON ALMS

BY

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

(347-407 A.D.)

DELIVERED AT ANTIoch AFTER PASSING THROUGH THE MARKET-PLACE IN THE WINTER-TIME, AND SEEING THE PAUPERS AND BEGGARS LYING THERE NEGLECTED

TRANSLATED BY MARGARET M. SHERWOOD

FROM THE PARALLEL GREEK AND LATIN TEXT OF THE ABBÉ MIGNE, IN VOLUME 31 (PP. 260-271) OF HIS PASTORALIAE CURSUS COMPLETUS, SERIES GRAECA

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The New York School of Philanthropy
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NEW YORK CITY
SERMON ON ALMS

I have come hither to-day to undertake a righteous mission among you, a mission profitable and suitable for you. By no others than the poor who dwell in this city of yours have I been appointed the spokesman. I have been sent not by word of mouth, nor by vote of the citizens, nor by a decree of the senate, but by a most grievous and pitiful spectacle.

For as I was hastening to preach before this congregation, I passed through the market-place and the alley, and I saw many lying in the midst of the crossings, some lacking hands and feet, some without eyes, some filled with ulcers and running sores and exposing as much as possible those parts which because of the suppuration should have been covered. And I thought I would be most inhuman if I did not appeal to your charity in behalf, especially since, in addition to the reasons I have just given, I am constrained thereto by the season of the year. For although it is always fitting to preach about alms (seeing that we in our dealings with other men are wanting in the great mercy of our Lord and Creator) yet at this season especially it is meet so to speak, when the cold is so urgent.

In the summer the pleasant weather is a great comfort to the poor; for they can even walk around naked with impunity, the rays of the sun taking the place of clothing, and can safely sleep on the bare pavement and spend the night under the open sky. And they do not require shoes, nor wine to drink, nor rich food. The fountains of water suffice for them. Su-
Sermon on Alms

Sufficient are the cheaper vegetables, or a few parched beans; for at this season of the year food is easy to procure.

The season has another advantage for them which is no less important—the opportunity to obtain work. Those who build houses, those who plough the earth, and those who sail the sea, all have great need of their services. For just as the wealthy have lands, houses, and other sources of income; so the poor have their strength and the proceeds of the labor of their hands. Nothing else is theirs.

In summer then they have some relief; but in winter they must wage a great war on every hand, doubly besieged, hunger gnawing their vitals within and cold congealing their flesh without and giving it the semblance of death. Because of this they require more abundant food and thicker clothing, and also a roof, blankets, shoes, and many other things. And this is much harder for them because they have no opportunity to work; since the season of the year does not permit.

Therefore, seeing that they are in want of more things and those the necessities of life, and seeing that they have no opportunity to work (no one employing these wretched men, no one calling them to labor), come, let us in place of employers hold out compassionate hands to them, and on this mission let us take as our companion Paul, the true patron and protector of the poor. For he more than anyone else concerns himself with this question. For this reason, when he divided the disciples with Peter, he did not divide the care of the poor; but when he had said, "They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship: that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision," he added, "Only that we should be mindful of the poor: which same thing also I was careful to do." (Gal. II. 9-10). In fact, throughout his epistles he preaches about these things, and you will not find a single letter of his without an admonition of this kind. For he knew, he knew with certainty of how great moment this question is; and therefore, as if he were placing an exquisite dome upon a building, so to his other admonitions and counsels he adds his teaching in regard to charity.

This is what he does, indeed, in this very place when, having spoken of the resurrection and after finishing everything else, he ends his sermon with these words: "Now concerning the collections for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye also. Upon the first day of the week . . . everyone of you . . ." (1 Cor. XVI. 1-2).

Note the apostle's skill, at what an opportune moment he brings in this admonition. For after he had reminded them of that terrible judgment and tribunal which is to come, and of that glory in which they who have lived righteously will be clothed, and of the life everlasting, only then does he begin to speak of these other things; that the hearer, sustained by hope and made a reader listener, may receive them more eagerly, now moved by the fear of instant judgment, now rejoicing in the contemplation of the blessings in store for him. For he who can philosophize on the resurrection and translate himself completely into that future life, will count the present as naught—wealth, possessions, gold, silver, rich clothing, amusements, a lavish table, and everything of that sort; and
he who considers these things as naught will more easily take upon himself the protection of the poor. And so Paul introduced his exhortation on alms after he had beautifully prepared their minds by means of that philosophy of the resurrection.

He did not say, "Now concerning the collections for beggars" or "for the poor", but "for the saints"; instructing his hearers to honor the poor—that is, of course, if they were devout—and to spurn the rich if they despised virtue. For he calls the Emperor himself impious and wicked, if he is an enemy of God; and the poor, saints, when they are upright and virtuous. Indeed, he calls Nero the mystery of iniquity, saying, "For the mystery of iniquity already worketh" (2 Thess. II. 7); while on the other hand those who were without food and who lived by begging their bread, he pronounces saints. But at the same time, somewhat obscurely, he teaches his hearers that they should not be puffed up in spirit and exalted by an admonition like this, as if they were dispensing bounty to a lower and baser order of beings, but that they should understand and feel that their greatest honor is to share the hardships of the poor.

II

Now it will surely be worth while to inquire who these saints are; for he mentions them not only here but elsewhere as well, when he says, "But now I shall go to Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints." (Rom. XV. 25). And Luke, in the Acts, when a great famine was threatening, speaks of these same saints as follows: "And the disciples, every man according to his ability, purposed to send relief to the brethren who dwelt in Jerusalem." (Acts XI. 29). And again, in a passage which I have already quoted, he says: "Only that we should be mindful of the poor: which same thing also I was careful to do." (Gal. II. 10). Verily after we had divided our work, so that I ministered to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews, we decided by common consent, he says, that this division should not apply to the poor. When they were preaching, Paul preached to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews, but in caring for the poor, they did not arrange that the one should devote his services to the poor of the Jews, the other only to the poor of the Gentiles; but both of them labored diligently for the poor of the Jews. And it is on that account that he said: "Only that we should be mindful of the poor: which same thing also I was careful to do".

Who then are these of whom he speaks both in the epistle to the Romans and in the epistle to the Galatians, and in whose behalf he exhorts the Macedonians also? They are the Jewish poor, who dwelt in Jerusalem.

And why is he so deeply concerned for them? Were there not paupers and mendicants in every state? Why does he send relief preferably to these and why does he solicit everyone in their behalf? Surely not without good reason, nor by chance, nor through respect for persons; but rather because it would be serviceable and profitable.

We must, however, go into the question a little more deeply. When the kingdom of the Jews had fallen to pieces and when they crucified Jesus, they had fulfilled the prophecy concerning them, "We have no king but Caesar" (John XIX. 15), and were at
length subjected to Roman rule and were not, as before, their own masters. They were not exactly slaves, as now they are, but were formed into military bands, and paid tribute to the emperors and received praetors from them. Moreover, for the most part they had their own laws, and punished offenders among their number according to traditional judgments. That they paid tribute to the Romans is well-known from the fact that they asked Jesus, tempting him, “Master, . . . is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?” To which Jesus answered, commanding them to show the coin: “Render . . . to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God, the things that are God’s.” (Matt. XXII. 17-21). Besides, Luke says that the temple was in the hands of tribunes and soldiers. (Luke XXII. 52). These are not insignificant proofs that the Jews had been made subject to the Romans. But that they had their own laws is evident from the fact that they stoned Stephen, even though he had not been tried at the tribunal; that they slew James, the brother of the Lord; and that they crucified Christ himself, even though the judge acquitted him of all guilt. Wherefore he washed his hands, saying: “I am innocent of this blood.” (Matt. XXVII. 24). And because he saw that they were very importunate, he did not make the decision himself, but withdrew. And they, taking matters into their own hands, later completed their work. Frequently, too, they attacked Paul.

And thus it came to pass that, because they had their own tribunal, their compatriots who believed suffered more severely than others. To be sure, in the other cities there were tribunals and laws and magistrates; but the Gentiles were not permitted arbitrarily to slay or stone those of their countrymen who fell away from the established faith, or to do them any injury. And if anyone was found to have done such a thing contrary to the decision of the judges, he was punished. To the Jews, however, great liberty was granted in this respect. Wherefore those of them who believed suffered greater ills than all the rest, as if they had been carried away into the midst of wolves, and no one rose up to deliver them. Yea, forsooth, they often scourged Paul. Hear his own words: “Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, . . .” (2 Cor. XI. 24-25).

That what I have been saying is not conjecture is shown by what Paul himself says in writing to the Hebrews: “But call to mind the former days, wherein, being illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions. And on the one hand indeed, by reproaches and tribulations, were made a gazing-stock; and on the other, became companions of them that were used in such sort. For . . . you took with joy the being stripped of your own goods, knowing that you have a better and a lasting substance in heaven.” (Heb. X. 32-34). And when he was exhorting the Thessalonians, he called to their minds the sufferings of those other Christians: “For you, brethren, are become followers of the churches of God which are in Judea, . . . : for you also have suffered the same things from your own countrymen, even as they have from the Jews.” (1 Thess. II. 15).

Therefore, because they suffered more grievously than all the others, and were not only treated without
mercy, but were even plundered and robbed of everything they possessed and were everywhere driven out, it is with justice that he urges everyone to take upon himself their protection. Again, he exhorts the Corinthians in their behalf with these words: "Now concerning the collections for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye also." (1 Cor. XVI. 1).

III

Who these saints are, and why he felt a special concern for them, has now been sufficiently explained. It remains for us to inquire why he mentions the Galatians. For why did he not say merely: "Now concerning the collections for the saints, do as follows: on the first day of the week let everyone of you put apart with himself, laying up . . . .", instead of adding, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye also"? Why does he mention, not one or two or three cities, but an entire people? That his hearers might be filled with greater zeal, and that the praise of others might give an impetus for greater emulation on their part.

Then he explains how they shall fulfill his commands: "On the first day of the week," he says, "let everyone of you put apart with himself, laying up what it shall well please him; that when I come, the collections be not then to be made." (1 Cor. XVI. 2). The first day of the week he called the Lord's Day. And why did he appoint this day for the offering? Why did he not say on the second day of the week or the third day, or on the sabbath itself? Most certainly not by chance, nor without good reason; but because he wished, by the very fitness of this day, to inspire greater zeal in the almsgivers. For in any transaction it is of no small importance to select the auspicious moment.

And why, you will say, is this day particularly favorable for persuading men to give alms? Because on this day they cease from all labor; because by this rest the mind is restored to greater cheerfulness; and, most significant of all, because on that day we enjoy countless blessings. For on that day the bonds of death were loosed, cursing was rendered powerless, sin overcome, the gates of hell were shattered, the devil conquered, the long war ended, men were reconciled with God, and our race restored to its pristine, nay, rather, to a far greater nobility: and on this day the sun beholds that wondrous sight — man made immortal. Wishing to recall to our minds all these things and others of like nature, Paul publicly appointed that day, taking the day itself as an advocate, as who should say to everyone: Reflect, O Man, how many blessings and of what nature you have received to-day; from how many and how great evils you have been snatched; what sort of creature you were before and into what you have since been transformed.

Then, too, if we remember our birthdays, and many men who were once slaves celebrate with great ceremony the days on which they received their freedom, so that some prepare feasts, and others still more generous distribute gifts; how much more fitting is it for us to celebrate this day, which it would not be wrong to call the birthday of the whole human race? For we had been lost, and we are found; dead,
and we live again; enemies, and we are reconciled. Wherefore it is meet to celebrate it with spiritual honor; not with feasts, not with wine-bibbing, not with drunkenness, not with dancing, but by bringing our poorer brethren to a plenteous store of riches.

I say these things not that you may applaud them merely, but also that you may do them. For you must not think that they were said to the Corinthians alone. Rather are they for the ears of each one of us and of all men as yet unborn. Then let us do even as Paul commanded: on the Lord’s Day let each one of us lay aside the Lord’s money at home. Let this be an immutable law and custom, and we shall have no need then of admonition or counsel. For no sermon or admonition is of so much avail as a deep-rooted custom. If we make it a rule to lay aside something every Lord’s Day for the relief of the poor, not even if a thousand wants assail us will we transgress this law.

After he had said, “On the first day of the week,” he added, “Everyone of you”. I am speaking, he says, not only to the rich, but to the poor also; not only to freemen, but also to slaves; not only to men, but also to women. Let no one be exempt from this service or free from this impost; but let everyone make an offering. And let not poverty stand in the way of this offering. For however poor you may be, you are not poorer than that widow who poured out all her substance. (Luke XXI. 2-4). However poor you may be, you are not poorer than the Sidonian woman who, although she had only a handful of meal, was not thereby deterred from receiving the prophet; but though she saw her children around her and hun-

ger pressing upon them and had nothing laid aside, nevertheless received the prophet joyfully (3 Kings XVII).

But why did he say, “Put apart with himself, laying up . . .”? (1 Cor. XVI. 2). Because, if it should chance that a certain man’s offering were small, he would be ashamed and blush to show it. Therefore Paul said, Keep it and guard it, and when, by reason of a great number of offerings, what was small shall have become great, then you shall bring it forth into the open.

And he did not say, making a collection (colligens) but, laying up treasure (thesaurizans), that you may know that you are not losing but gaining, for this expenditure is transformed into a treasure—a treasure, I say, beyond all other treasure. For earthly treasure is the object of scheming and is apt to depreciate, and often works the destruction of those who have acquired it. But not so the heavenly treasure. For it cannot be diminished or assailed by cunning, and it is a means of safety to those who possess and receive it. It is not consumed by time; it is not destroyed by envy; but, absolutely inaccessible to these insidious foes, it confers a thousand blessings on those who gather it.

IV

Therefore let us obey this mandate and let us do even as Paul commands; let us place the Lord’s money beside the private store in our house, that these private funds may thereby be protected. For even as in royal treasuries, if the private wealth of a subject is deposited there, his money is rendered safe by the
presence of the royal treasure; so also, if you have the money of the poor laid up in your home—the money which you collect on the Lord’s Day—it will ensure safety to your own store. Thus you will be the steward of your funds, appointed by Paul. What do I mean by this? The money which you have already laid aside will furnish the occasion and starting point for collecting more. For if you commence this good habit, you will be able to stimulate yourself to further effort without any pledge. In this way let every man’s home be a church, being the repository of sacred funds. For the treasure lying there is his contribution. The place where the money of the poor lies is safe from demons. Of a truth, money collected for alms is a better defense for the home than shield or spear or arms or bodily strength or bands of soldiers.

After he had shown when, by whom, and in what manner money should be collected for this purpose, he leaves the question of the amount which is suitable to the discretion of the givers. For he did not say, Give such and such an amount, lest the command should prove burdensome, and many would object that they could not afford it; lest the poor should say, But what if we cannot? But he left the amount of the offering to the discretion of the givers: “Let everyone of you”, he says, “put apart with himself, laying up what it shall well please him” (1 Cor. XVI. 2). He did not say, what he shall be able to give, or what he shall have acquired, but, “What it shall well please him”, or, What shall be suitable,—showing that he will thereby obtain the approval and the mercy of God.

For Paul did not have in mind merely that money should be given to the poor, but that it should be given cheerfully. And God did not ordain the giving of alms only in order that the poor might be fed, but also that blessings might be added to the givers, and even more for the sake of the latter than of the former. If his only concern had been for the poor, he would have prescribed merely that money should be given and would not have demanded cheerfulness in the givers. Instead of this you see that the apostle earnestly exhorts the givers of alms to be glad and cheerful. And elsewhere he says: “Not with sadness, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. IX. 7); not merely a giver, but one who gives cheerfully. And again in another place: “He that giveth, with simplicity; he that ruleth, with carefulness; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.” (Rom. XII. 8). For it is true almsgiving to give in such wise that you rejoice and think you are receiving more than you are giving. And so he tries in every way to make the command light and the offering a source of joy.

Consider in how many ways he tries to lighten the burden of the injunction:

First, he commands not one or two or three to give, but the whole state. For the collection (collecta) is nothing else than the contribution and share offered by all.

Second, he preserves the dignity of the beneficiaries, for he does not call them “the poor” but “the saints”.

Third, he cites the example of others, who had a similar institution: “As I have given order”, he says, “to the churches of Galatia”.
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Next, he suggests a suitable day: "On the first day of the week," he says, "let everyone of you put apart with himself, laying up".

Five, he does not command that all the alms be contributed at once, but slowly and gradually. For it is not so good a plan to command that everything be offered on one day as to divide the offering into smaller quantities over a long period, since by the latter method the expense is hardly felt.

Six, he does not prescribe the amount, but leaves this to the discretion of the givers, and explains that God himself has granted us this freedom of choice. For when he says, "What it shall well please him", he intimates both these things.

He adds, besides, a seventh suggestion, saying, "That when I come, the collections be not then made". At the same time he encourages those who are waiting for his coming and comforts them by implying that the day of his arrival is fixed.

Then, not content with what he has already said, he adds an eighth proposition. And what is that? "And when I shall be with you", he says, "whosoever you shall approve by letters, them will I send to carry your grace . . . . And if it be meet that I also go, they shall go with me." (1 Cor. XVI. 3-4).

See how far from arrogance and how modest is that saintly and noble soul; notice how punctilious, how full of love. For he did not desire, nay, he would not allow that the men who were to take charge of the funds should be appointed by his own choice. On the contrary he permitted the Corinthians themselves to elect them and did not consider himself insulted because he did not appoint the men himself. He thought it would be absurd that the offering should be their affair, but the choice of the administrators his. And so he granted them this privilege also, at the same time showing his modesty and giving no handle or cover for criticism and suspicion. For although he was more glorious than the sun and free from any shadow of evil, yet he took enormous pains to adapt himself to his weaker brethren, and to avoid false suspicions. Therefore he says: "And when I shall be with you, whosoever you shall approve by letters, them will I send to carry your grace . . . ." What do you say? That you are not going to set sail, nor take charge of the money, but that you entrust this to others? But lest the indolent thinkers of such thought should evade responsibility, see how he guards against it. For he did not say simply, "Whosoever you shall approve, I will send". But what? "Approve by letters". That you might reflect: Even though I shall not be there in body, yet through my letters I shall be present, a participant in the ministry of the men I have chosen.

V

Are we worthy even of standing in Paul's shadow, or of touching his shoe, when he, shining so gloriously above all, refuses all worldly honors, while we are annoyed and take it ill if the deacons of such funds are not appointed by our vote and choice, and feel insulted when some of them spend the money in their charge without consulting us? See too in what manner he speaks of himself everywhere and never forgets. And indeed he does not here call it a command or alms, but "grace" ("to carry your grace") ; sho
ing that grace is just as necessary in the relief of the poor as in raising the dead, driving out devils, and cleansing lepers,—nay, even far more necessary in that case than in the others. And yet, even though there be grace, we require zeal and eagerness in order that we may choose grace and desire it and render ourselves worthy of it. Therefore he added this for their encouragement, that he would send a letter with their messengers.

He even went still further, promising to be the companion of their journey: "And if it be meet that I also go," he says, "they shall go with me" (1 Cor. XVI. 3-4). I want you to notice his wisdom at this point. He did not refuse once for all to go with them, nor did he promise definitely—that too he left to the decision of the donors, and made them the arbiters of his going, intimating that if the offering were large enough to warrant it he would undertake the journey. For when he says, "If it be meet," this is what he means to imply. Now if he had absolutely refused to go, he would have rendered them more timid and hesitating; but if he had definitely promised, he would have made them more careless. Therefore he neither refuses absolutely nor promises, but leaves that to the Corinthians to decide, saying, "And if it be meet." For hearing that Paul himself might be the bearer of their offering they would address themselves with greater zeal and enthusiasm to the undertaking, because his saintly hands were to bear their gifts and his prayers bless their offering.

Now if the Corinthians made their gifts with the greater joy because it was Paul who was to receive them, what excuse will you have, you who are about to give offerings to Paul's Master? For it is He who receives them, through the poor. But unless the offering had been large and worthy of consideration, he to whom the whole world had been entrusted and whose charge embraced all the Churches as far as the sun shines, would not have promised to take charge of the contributions. Pondering these things in our hearts, therefore, whether we ourselves dispense alms or whether we give them to others to distribute, let us not feel faint-hearted and gloomy because our wealth is being diminished. For even as the farmer, while he is sowing the seed and filling the earth with good things, is not sad and mournful and does not look upon his labor as an expenditure, but thinks of it rather in the light of the profit and harvest that it will bring forth, even though his hope is not sure; so would it not be foolish for you to hesitate, delay, and allege poverty, you who are sowing for much greater ends, and who are about to lay your wealth in the very hands of Christ?

Could not God have commanded the earth to bring forth pure gold? For He who said, "Let the earth bring forth the green herb" (Gen. I. 11), and immediately displayed it clothed with verdure, could surely have commanded fountains and rivers to pour forth a continuous stream of gold. But He did not desire this, for He condemned many to poverty, both for their own good and for yours. For poverty is more conducive to virtue than wealth, and for the sin-laden no small consolation arises from works of charity.

And God considers this of so great moment that when He had come to earth, and, clothed in the flesh, dwelt among men, He did not refuse nor consider it
unbecoming to distribute with His own hands the things which were donated for the poor. And although He had made so many loaves of bread, and could by a mere command produce whatever He wanted, although He could display a thousand treasures at a time; He did not choose to do so; but, instead, He commanded His disciples to keep a pouch and to carry what was put therein and out of it to minister to the poor. For when He was speaking in riddles to Judas about His betrayal, the disciples, not understanding what He said, thought, so He says, that He had told Judas to give something to the poor: for “The purse he himself had, and carried the things that were put therein” (John XII. 6).

Verily God greatly glorifies compassion, not only His toward us, but also ours toward our companions in servitude; wherefore He established many laws both in the Old and in the New Testament, commanding men to be kind in words and in money and in works. Concerning this Moses speaks in various places in his laws. This the prophets, inspired by God, proclaim: “For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice” (Hosea VI. 6). The Apostles also act and speak in a like tenor (Matt. IX. 13). Therefore let us not neglect this matter, which is of benefit not only to the poor, but above all to ourselves, and through which we receive greater blessings than we bestow.

VI

Now what follows I do not say without good reason, for most people question the poor inquisitively, inquire their native land, their manner of life, their character, trade, and their physical condition, making accusations and demanding a thousand statements in regard to their health. Because of this many of them pretend that their bodies are mutilated, and feign injury in order to move our hard-hearted indifference. And although it is serious to reproach them in this wise in summer, yet it is not so serious as in winter. For then, when they are oppressed by the cold, would it not be the height of cruelty to show oneself so harsh and inhuman a judge as to make no allowance for men who are without employment?

Then why did Paul, someone will say, give out this law to the Thessalonians: “If any man will not work, neither let him eat” (2 Thess. III. 10)? It was that you too might hearken to these things, and that you might rule not only the life of your fellow-man but also your own by these words. Truly the laws of Paul were made not only for the poor but for us also.

Now I am going to say something annoying and disagreeable. I know you will be angry; but I will say it nevertheless. For I am saying it not to offend but to correct. We reproach them with idleness—which is often excusable — yet we perpetrate sins far more serious than idleness. But I, you will say, have a paternal inheritance. Well then, tell me, because that man is poor and was born of poor parents and did not have wealthy ancestors, is he on that account worthy of death? Surely for that very reason he would deserve commiseration and pity from the rich. You, forsooth, who spend the day in the theaters, or at the assemblies and in conversation, from which no profit results, reproaching many others while thinking that you yourself do nothing wrong or unprofitable; do
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you condemn this poor wretch, who is engaged all day in prayers, tears, and a thousand miseries; do you drag him to the tribunal and require him to give an account of himself? Are these, I ask you, the attributes of the human soul? Therefore when you say, What shall we say to Paul? I reply that you shall quote these words to yourself and not to the poor. And furthermore, do not stop with his threats but read also his mercy; for he who says, "If any man doth not work, neither let him eat," added, "But you, brethren, be not weary in well-doing" (2 Thes. III. 13).

But to what extent do they seek to deceive you? They are fugitives, they say, strangers, worthless creatures, who have left their native land and are gathering in our city. Do you resent this, tell me, and do you pluck the crown of honor from your city, because all men consider it a common refuge, and prefer it to their own land? Nay, rather, for this reason you ought to exult and rejoice, that to you, as if to some common market, they all run, and consider this city their common mother.

Do not, I beseech you, tarnish so great a glory; do not destroy this ancient renown of your fathers. For once upon a time, when famine was threatening to envelope the whole earth, the inhabitants of this city sent not a little money through Barnabas and Paul to the people of Jerusalem, the very ones of whom I have been speaking (Acts XI. 30).

Of what mercy then and of what grace would we be worthy, when our own ancestors relieved far distant sufferers with their money and even hastened to their aid in person, if we drive away those who take refuge with us from other lands and require them to give an account of themselves, even though we know that we ourselves are the greatest of sinners? Nay, if God should examine us as closely as we examine the case of the poor, we would not obtain any grace or mercy. For "With what judgment you judge", He says, "you shall be judged" (Matt. VII. 2). Be therefore merciful and kindly affectioned toward your fellow-servant; and forgive many sins, and exercise mercy, that so you may yourself obtain a like judgment.

Why do you make so much trouble for yourself? Why do you investigate so carefully? If God had commanded us to inquire into the lives of others, to demand reports from them and to investigate their habits minutely, would not many be indignant? Would they not say among themselves, What is the purpose of this anyway? God has given us a difficult task. Can we investigate the life of others? Do we know what sins such a one has committed? Would not many say things of this sort? But as it is, when He has excused us from an investigation of this nature, and has promised to give us a perfect reward, whether they be good or sinful who receive our alms, we bring all this trouble on ourselves.

And whence have you evidence, you will say, that we shall receive our reward whether we give to good men or to sinful? From what God himself has said: "Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you; that you may be like your Father who is in heaven, who maketh His sun to rise upon the just and the unjust" (Matt. V. 44-45). Therefore even as your Lord, although countless men blaspheme Him and
practice fornication, steal, rob, dig up graves, commit sins without end, does not withdraw His universal bounty, but brings forth the common sunlight, the common rains, and the fruits of the earth, showing His loving-kindness toward men; so do you also, and when you have opportunity for showing mercy and kindness, then help the poor, satisfy their hunger, deliver them from wretchedness, and inquire no further. For if we investigate the lives of men too carefully, we shall never have pity on anyone; but, entangled in this ill-timed and fruitless curiosity, we shall remain devoid of all helpfulness and we shall furthermore be performing a burdensome task which is neither advantageous nor necessary.

Therefore, I beseech you, let us cast aside this inopportune curiosity and give alms to all the poor, and let us do it generously, that we, too, on that day of judgment, may receive from God abundant pity and kindness; which I pray we may all obtain, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory and power and honor, now and forever, world without end. AMEN.