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978-1-108-06736-2 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 4

Thomas Percival

Excerpt

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E S S A Y I.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE

STATE OF POPULATION

I N

M A N C H E S T E R,

AND OTHER ADJACENT PLACES^(a).

FROM an account taken in 1717, the number of inhabitants in Manchester, for I am uncertain whether Salford ^(b) was included, appears to have been 8000.

By a survey made in 1757 of Manchester and Salford, the number of inhabitants was

^(a) Inserted in the Philosophical Transactions, vols. LXIV. LXV. LXVI.

^(b) MANCHESTER and SALFORD, though distinguished by different names, like London, Westminster, and the Borough of Southwark, may be considered as one and the same town, being divided only by a small river, over which two bridges are erected.

VOL. II.

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found

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found to be 19839. And from 1754 to 1761 inclusive, the number of deaths amounted to 5769. The annual deaths therefore, at the period of the survey, must have been 721, exclusive of dissenters. It is probable, as will appear afterwards, that these would have increased the number to 771. At this time therefore 1 in 25.7 of the inhabitants of Manchester died every year.

A NEW survey of Manchester has been executed this summer (1773) with great care and accuracy, of which the following is a particular account.

MANCHESTER.		SALFORD.
3402	Houfes	866.
5317	Families	1099.
10548	Males	2248.
11933	Females	2517.
7724	Married	1775.
432	Widowers	89.
1064	Widows	149.
7782	Under 15	1793.
3252	Above 50	640.
342	Male Lodgers	18.
150	Female ditto	13.
44	Empty Houfes	26.

FROM hence it appears that the number of tenanted houfes in Manchester and Salford amounts

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amounts to 4268; the families to 6416; and the inhabitants to 27,246. The proportion of persons to a house therefore is more than $6\frac{1}{7}$; and of individuals to a family about $4\frac{1}{7}$. The females exceed the males by 1654; the widows are more than double the number of widowers; and about a seventh part of the inhabitants have attained the age of fifty.

The following Table is formed from the Register of Burials and Baptisms at the Collegiate or Parish Church in Manchester, and gives the annual number of each on an average.

	Burials.	Baptisms.
From 1580 to 1587 inclusive,	184	
1680 1687	286	
1720 1727	359	
1754 1760	736	769
1761 1765	731	843
1766 1770	870	970

But it should be remarked, that this account does not include the deaths or births amongst the dissenters. These, by a late improvement in our Bills of Mortality, are now received into the Parish Register; and last year (1772) the former amounted to 50, the latter to 181. Admitting these to be the average of unregistered baptisms and burials in Manchester, the annual medium of deaths from 1768 to 1772 inclusive,

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will

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will be 958. And the annual births during the same period, with the like allowance, will be 1098. Hence the present proportion of annual deaths to the inhabitants is nearly as 1 to 28 4; and of births to the inhabitants almost as 1 to 25. The births also, it appears, exceed the burials 140 every year at a medium.

THE rapid growth of Manchester is sufficiently evident from the preceding facts. Yet Liverpool, during the same space of time, has increased in a much greater proportion. This appears from the following Table, which I have extracted from a very curious and entertaining work, lately published by my ingenious friend the Rev. Dr. Enfield, Lecturer on the Belles Lettres in the Academy at Warrington.

(c) Year.	Number of Inhabitants.	Annual Addition.
1700	5714	
1710	8168	245
1720	10446	227
1730	12074	162
1740	18086	601
1750	22099	401
1760	25787	368
1770	34004	822

(c) History of Liverpool, page 28, second edition, corrected.

ACCORDING

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ACCORDING to this Table, Liverpool has at present upwards of six times the number of inhabitants which it contained at the beginning of the century.

BUT the progress of trade and opulence in Manchester has been more than adequate to its advancement in population. For a considerable part of the manufactory of this flourishing town, is carried on in the adjacent country, which is thereby crowded with houses and inhabitants. So populous are the environs of Manchester, that every house in the township has been found, by a late survey, to contain, at an average, six persons. The township is indeed but of small extent; and the greatest part of it will probably, in a short time, be included in Manchester. It contains 311 houses; 361 families; 947 males; 958 females; 656 married persons; 21 widowers; 42 widows; 763 under 15 years of age; and 222 above 50.

It is pleasing to observe, that, notwithstanding the enlargement of Manchester, there has been a sensible improvement in the healthiness and longevity of its inhabitants; for the proportion of deaths is now considerably less than in 1757. But this is chiefly to be ascribed, as Dr. Price has justly observed (*d*), to the large accession of

(*d*) SEE a most valuable Treatise on Reversionary Payments, p. 188, third edition.

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new

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new settlers from the country. For as these usually come in the prime of life, they must raise the proportion of *inhabitants* to the *deaths*, and also of *births* and *weddings* to the *burials*, higher than they would otherwise be. However, exclusive of this consideration, there is good reason to believe that Manchester is more healthy now than formerly. The new streets are wide and spacious, the poor have larger and more commodious dwellings, and the increase of trade affords them better clothing and diet than they before enjoyed. I may add too, that the late improvements in medicine have been highly favourable to the preservation of life. The cool regimen in fevers, and in the small-pox; the free admission of air; attention to cleanliness; and the general use of antiseptic remedies and diet, have certainly mitigated the violence, and lessened the mortality of some of the most dangerous and malignant distempers to which mankind are incident. The ulcerous sore throat, which prevailed here in the year 1770, is the only epidemic which has appeared in Manchester, with any fatal degree of violence, for many years. Miliary fevers, which were formerly frequent in this town and neighbourhood, now rarely occur; and if I may judge from my own experience, the natural small-pox (for inoculation is not much practised here) carries off a smaller proportion of those who

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who are attacked by it, than is commonly supposed. Puerperal diseases also decrease every year amongst us, by the judicious method of treating women in child-bed: and as nature is now more consulted in the management of infants, it is reasonable to suppose that this must be favourable to their health and preservation.

BUT it must be acknowledged that large towns are injurious to population; and the advantages I have enumerated, which in hamlets or country villages would have operated with full force to the benefit of mankind, have only served to check the destructive tendency of the accumulation of inhabitants in Manchester. In the Pais de Vaud, a district of the province of Bern in Switzerland, and in a country parish in Brandenburg, 1 in 45 of the inhabitants die annually; and at Stoke Damarell in Devonshire, 1 in 54(*e*): whereas in this town the yearly mortality appears to be 1 in 28; in Liverpool 1 in 27; and in London 1 in 21. Half the children who are born in Manchester die under five years old; and the proportion which the births bear to the number of inhabitants who attain the age of 80, is as 30 to 1. Diseases are most frequent and fatal here in the months of January, February, and March; and

(*e*) SEE the Treatise before referred to, on Reversionary Payments, by my learned friend Dr. Price.

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leaf

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least so in July, August, and September. The mortality of these two seasons is as 11 to 8; and of the first six months of the year compared with the last six months, as 7 to 6.

IN April, 1773, several gentlemen, from motives of curiosity, undertook an enumeration of the people of BOLTON, a manufacturing town about twelve miles distant from Manchester. The houses were found to be 946; the males 2159; the females 2392; and persons aged seventy years and upwards, 74. To these numbers 17 must be added, which by a mistake were not classed under either denomination. The inhabitants of Bolton therefore amount to 4568; the number of individuals to a house is 4.8; and about a sixtieth part of the people have attained the age of seventy.

LITTLE BOLTON, a suburb of Bolton, including the manor, and extending into the country as far as the inhabitants are subject to *suit* and *service*, contains 232 houses; 771 individuals; 361 males; 410 females; and 15 persons aged seventy years and upwards. From this account it appears that the inhabitants are 3.3 to a house; and that 1 in 51 has reached the age of seventy. The difference in these proportions between a small *town*, and a *country manor* contiguous to it, is worthy of observation.

MR.

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MR. FLETCHER has favoured me with an enumeration of the people of BURY, which he has just executed with great care. The town contains 463 houses; 464 families; and 2090 inhabitants. Each house and family therefore consists of $4\frac{1}{2}$ individuals. Bury is situated nine miles from Manchester, and is enriched by a branch of the woollen manufactory.

AT ALTRINGHAM, a market town in Cheshire, which has no manufactory, the number of houses, according to an exact survey made in July, 1772, was 248; of inhabitants 1029, or $4\frac{1}{7}$ to a house. An enumeration of the people of this town was made about twenty years ago, at which time they amounted very nearly to 1000.

THE following is a comparative view of the state of population, the duration of life, and the mortality of the several seasons of the year, &c. in EASTHAM, and ROYTON, two country places widely different from each other in climate, situation, and in the occupation of their inhabitants.

THE parish of Eastham lies in Wirral, one of the hundreds into which Cheshire is divided, and is extended along the banks of the river Mersey, a few miles distant from the Irish sea. The people are most of them farmers; though some are fishermen, and others are employed in the ferry to Liverpool.

ROYTON

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ROYTON is a chapelry, situated ten miles eastward of Manchester, under the great chain of mountains which divides Lancashire and Yorkshire. The inhabitants are employed chiefly in the cotton and linen manufactory; a few of them are farmers; and some I believe work in the coal pits, with which this country abounds.

I AM indebted to my learned friend the Rev. Mr. Travis, Vicar of Eastham, for the survey of his own parish, which he undertook at my desire, and executed himself; and also for that of Royton, which was made by his uncle, the worthy and respectable clergyman of that chapelry.

JANUARY